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The More Excellent Sacrifice

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J. W. Sayers

The More Excellent Sacrifice

MEMORIAL-DAY SERMONS

By

REV. JOHN W. SAYERS, D. D.,

OF THE PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE.

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Dedicated

TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE MEN

WHO FOLLOWED THE FLAG OF THEIR

COUNTRY ON LAND OR SEA.

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	The More Excellent Sacrifice,	9
II.	The Shibboleth of Humanity,	36
III.	Honorable Scars,	59
IV.	Knowing as We are Known,	83
V.	The Invisible Army,	110
VI.	The Stone of Help,	136
VII.	Christ the Liberator,	162
VIII.	A Glorious Victory,	181

I.

THE MORE EXCELLENT SACRIFICE.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.—HEB. XI, 4.

HUMAN life is of short duration. Of all our years but few may be devoted to the accomplishment of great purposes. The years of helpless infancy, those required for education and training and those occupied by the weakness of age, even if we outlive our allotted threescore and ten, do not leave many for the active and aggressive work which brings to us a name that will not be forgotten after we are gone. Hence few men, of all the earth's millions ever do much that is remembered after them. It is, therefore, not so much what men may accomplish in this life as it is what their work may do for the world after they are dead. "Art is long and life is short," is an old proverb. Art lives long after life

has passed away. The living man talks to his day and generation and the living hear him. The dead man if he talks at all, does so to the ages which succeed him and it matters not whether his life was eminently good or notoriously wicked, he still talks.

> "The evil that men do lives after them:
> The good is oft interred with their bones."

This, however, does not express a whole truth, for the good lives always to a noble purpose and keeps the world slowly moving toward the right.

Abel was the second son of Adam, and the fourth human being of whom the oldest history gives us any account. However righteous he may have been, he could, while living, have had but few auditors to whom he could impart his knowledge or influence by his example.

What his life was to do for the world, was to be done in after ages, when men should require great lessons and the race should need teaching by example. The writers of the Holy Scriptures were not inspired for their day and generation alone, but for all time.

Through the ages they have been speaking and will continue to speak through an influence that has widened, as education has broadened the lives of

people. Solomon speaks wisdom to-day as much as when he wrote the Proverbs which have been golden grain in the fields of every generation since his time. Paul speaks to this generation upon doctrinal points, as authoritatively as when he wrote the wonderful epistles which have become the text-books of Christian teaching. They being dead yet speak. Christ's word and promises uttered nineteen hundred years ago, still bring comfort and strength to the believer's heart as though His words of love and encouragement were audibly whispered in their ears. These truths bring us to the reflection that

> "It is not all of life to live,
> Nor all of death to die."

Life would be to us a solemn fact even if we knew that it ended absolutely with the death of the body. But when we realize that we are to live on and speak and teach through the ages, either for good or ill, according to what we have done, then the judgment after death should become to us a tremendous incentive to duty before God, in order that our sacrifice may be acceptable to Him.

There are two sorts of sacrifice mentioned in the text, one of them more excellent than the other. The one was of the firstlings of the flock and the

fat thereof, offered in faith and love and self-devotion. The other of the quickly perishing fruits of the ground, of little value indifferently tendered, without gratitude to the Giver of all good and from hands that were unclean and a heart that was perverse and wicked. The one was a sacrifice of atonement for sin, a pious expression of humility and unworthiness and a supplication for Divine favor, while the other was a formal and heartless offering of mere acknowledgment accompanied by a haughty spirit and an indifferent manner which did not commend the act to God's favor.

From the time that sin entered the world and death by sin, the two powers of good and evil have been at constant warfare, striving against each other and contending for the supremacy. In the old Persian religion it was the light against the darkness—Ormuzd, the principle of purity and goodness, against Ahriman, the principle of impurity and evil. In our theology it is Satan against God. Between these inharmonious elements humanity has had a long and weary march and a sad struggle through all the centuries. The very civilization under which we live has been secured only by hard fighting. It has been built up through ages of torture, suffering, and discomforts. The foundations of human government

have been laid in ruin and blood, while the religion which we enjoy has had its logic worked out in the darkness and solitude of the dungeon, and its faith purified by the fires of martyrdom. Our spiritual strength has been increased to us through the agonies of the cross while our hopes have been assured to us and brightened through the triumphs by which through God, we have overcome the assaults of the adversary and the persecutions of the world. "In the world," said Christ, "ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The only sacrifice God requires of us today is that of the lowly and contrite heart.

The text presents to us many important topics for thought. We gather here and there from the Bible many abstract declarations each of which men sometimes accept as the essence of Christian duty. Many of these things, possibly all of them, are pleasing to God; but taken separately they are far from establishing the acceptability of our offering to God. Goodness is a quality in our nature that God approves; but mere passive goodness will not save the soul nor win the world to Christ. Hope is an attribute divinely inspired within us; but it will not save us if it becomes the only element in our religious life. Thousands of men willfully sin against

God's law and yet vainly hope for His mercy. Charity is a most valuable quality in man, and one that has the highest commendation of the Master; but in a worldly sense we may exercise charity to the utmost of our means and opportunities and still miss heaven at last. Faith is another essential to the make-up of the perfect man, but taken alone it is but one step up the ladder that leads toward God. For faith, said the Apostle James, "if it has not works is dead, being alone." And works, which embrace so much in their comprehensive meaning, which of themselves so nearly make the perfect man, only justify and do not save us. We must add to our works obedience and faith to make our offering pleasing and acceptable to God. Abraham, in obedience to the Divine command, carried the child of his love to the altar. The sacrifice was complete in the act, even without the shedding of blood or the kindling of the fire. Faith in the Divine wisdom which issued the decree and ready obedience to comply with the command, completed the trial of his faith and it was imputed to him for righteousness.

It is important, therefore, in the sacrifices we are called upon to make, that we shall have a witness to our righteousness—important that that which speaks for us when we have gone hence shall have the approval of God.

The great anchor to Christian faith is the immortality of the soul. Are we to live to all eternity in another world after this life is over? It would be a dreadful thought to contemplate, as a truth, that this life forever ended our mission; that the soul which dwells within this body shall perish and be no more; that this wondrous spirit of ours that thinks and plans and acts, that loves and hopes and worships, shall die and vanish like an extinguished flame; that death shall forever separate us from all these scenes of loveliness, from all these associations of friendship and affection, from all this intercourse through which we contrive and plan for the interest and happiness of others; that we shall look into each other's faces no more nor recall the many joys which have lighted up our lives and made us thankful to God for our existence.

"Alas for love if that were all,
And naught beyond, O earth."

We do not entertain the thought; we dismiss it because we do not believe it. God's Word of Revelation says that it is not true. Our yearning natures look into the beyond and accept the verity of Holy Writ. But does death draw a line of absolute separation between this world and the next? The

living can not cross the boundary as Enoch and Elijah did without going through the dark valley. But may not the disembodied spirits come back to us? Even though their presence be invisible may they not be round and about us, and though dead, speak to our spirits? Angels came to Lot at Sodom. They appeared in the heavens and sang the song of "Peace on earth" over the plains of Bethlehem. They ministered to Christ in His temptation. They rolled the stone from His sepulcher and announced His resurrection to the weeping women. We are assured that God sends His ministering angels to earth upon errands of mercy and love. Surely then our dead are not lost to us. They do return to us, they communicate with our spirits and minister to our needs. How fondly we think of our dead. How lovingly we cherish their memories. How we long for the old affection and companionship. How we sigh for

> "The touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still!"

and yet not feel the one nor hear the other; but somehow, being dead they do speak: and O the influence of the thoughts of these departed loved ones upon our conduct and lives. We call them tenderly

and lovingly into our reveries and musings. We summon them to our side in our hours of loneliness and solitude, we communicate with them in the night watches and cherish them in our affections and thoughts.

If we are to speak after death as the characters described in the text are speaking, it becomes of the highest importance that we shall live right lives and do righteous deeds, that our teachings may be pure and our example be beyond reproach. Think of all eternity through which we shall look back upon the influence we have left behind us whether for good or ill! Think of Herod the Great, clothed with kingly power, but with hands reeking with the blood of his murdered household, until Augustus said of him that he would rather be Herod's swine than his son! Think of his murder of the innocents that among them he might destroy the infant Savior.

Think of all his dreadful crimes, which have brought to his memory the execrations of the ages, and then turn to the Babe of Bethlehem, whose after-life was a series of sorrows and persecutions, but who went about doing good, leaving at last to the world the grand legacy of the Cross upon which He suffered death. What a lesson for us to contemplate to-day.

"Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,—they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone;
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine;
By one man's plain truth to manhood, and to God's supreme design."

What, therefore, shall be the nature of our sacrifice? It may be a hard thing to hold ourselves aloof from sin when it presents itself in some alluring and attractive form. It may be difficult to overcome the envy and selfishness of our own hearts and to satisfy ourselves that we are our brothers' keepers, when the advantages of preferment and gain are in our favor. It may be a hard struggle to overcome our natural tendencies to self-indulgence and ignoble ease. In fact, our disinclination to submit to wholesome restraints may make duty an irksome path for us to pursue. But God demands the sacrifice of our entire lives to His service. Through the text the same choice is offered to us that Joshua offered to the tribes in his last interview with them. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," whether the God of your fathers or the false gods of the people in whose land ye dwell. Ours must be an acceptable sacrifice.

It is certain that we can not serve two masters; if we love sin we can not be obedient to God; if we serve mammon we can not honor Christ. The Master gave us a safe rule for our faith when he declared the first and great commandment to be, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and that the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

To offer any sacrifice we must come before God with clean hands and pure hearts. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord," said the wise man. Cain's offering was not acceptable because of his sin, nor will ours be if it is not offered in the sincerity of our lives and purpose.

Nations, like individuals, are moral personages, and are alike responsible to God for their conduct. If they would secure the commendation of the Great Master their sacrifices before Him must be acceptable and pleasing to Him. It is the righteous offering only that obtains the witness. Where are all the mighty nations of the past which sacrificed so much of human life to satisfy their ambition? Where are the mighty conquerors whose terrible armies shook the earth with their tread? Where are all the governments whose foundations have been built upon the ruins of others which they had destroyed?

Their own fall and ruin speaks through the pages of history the voice of warning against oppression and sin and utter the solemn prophecy that, before the God of nations, no sacrifice can ever obtain the witness unless it be righteous and acceptable to Him. Look at the pyramids, and the ruined temples and tombs of Egypt reared by the blood-sweat of starved and oppressed millions. Look at the great mounds along the Euphrates and the Tigris, the sad remains of splendid architecture which time has mercifully concealed under her shifting sands! Look at the magnificent ruins of Greece and Rome—fragments still remaining of temple and altar, reared to the worship of the false; sculptured column and architrave, statues of marble and pedestal of granite, all broken and fallen under a destructive policy more debasing and false than the worship which dragged them down! Being dead they speak, but in minor tones of sadness which cast a deep gloom over the memory of their greatness.

We need not enumerate the nationalities, but from Egypt down to the last government that has fallen, all, without exception, bear upon their foreheads the mark of Cain. They have been the oppressors and slayers of their people and the hand

of vengeance, which they raised against others, has not been stayed by others against them. They being dead speak to the nations of to-day more forcibly than the living nations can speak.

We see from these facts that the book of the past is open to the people of this country. The lessons of beginning, growth, and development are upon its pages for our profit. The lessons of rise and fall are there for our warning. The lesson of success and eminent attainment, under conditions which made the offering acceptable before God, are written there for our encouragement. The lessons of decline under circumstances through which cupidity and ambition have filled the cup of antiquity to the brim and made the sacrifice a heartless mockery, are also there, bidding us beware of the sins which resulted in hopeless ruin. Surely we have had examples and lessons enough to teach us that we can not discard virtue, forget God, and expect through sin to prosper. If we leave the ancient landmarks we will lose our way and will never reach the high destiny that has formed the ideal of our just ambition. If we are not a God-fearing and truth-loving people; if we forget our traditions and turn our backs upon Divine revelation, we will become as chaff before the wind and our much loved institutions will perish.

Let us look for a moment at our traditions. We were a land of promise, held in reserve while the great experiment of social life was being worked out in the Old World. The time came when the developing energies of the old nationalities must have new fields for their enterprise. They were held in bondage by old customs and fallacies regarding social life. False notions of trade and of governments were impediments to advancement and false religions were standing in the way of Gospel truth and Gospel liberty.

Columbus was raised up by Providence as a pioneer into new fields. He sailed to the West full of religious zeal and enthusiasm, searching for the shores of an old land, but found a new world. He looked upon the approaching shore from the deck of his vessel with glad surprise.

He had discovered a new country of inviting climate and balmy air; a very paradise to look upon. His first impulse was to give the glory to God. His first act in landing upon the shore was the worship of Almighty God and a dedication of the land to Him in the name of the sovereigns of Spain. He came back to the field of his discovery believing that, as a part of his mission, he was to convert the heathen of the new land to the Christian faith. He

was mistaken in his calling. The fruits he brought to the sacrifice were of the earth earthy, and his offering was not accepted.

One hundred and twenty years later, amid the storms of winter, a little tempest-tossed vessel anchored in a sheltering bay far up the coast. The scene shoreward was the opposite to that upon which Columbus had looked. The winter was severe, the cold was intense, the forests were dark and forbidding, the inhabitants were hostile and savage. There was nothing inviting or inspiring in the landscape. But the land before them was to be their home. It was a courageous company that had come for freedom's sake. That little ship, the *Mayflower,* was destined for a memorable place in history. Within its cabin this republic had its origin in the compact that was signed by brave and religious men, declaring their faith in God and the right of men to worship Him according to the dictates of conscience, a compact sealed with tears of faith and made holy by prayer.

The foundation of our system which vouchsafes freedom to men and which proclaims liberty to the world was there laid in religious truth and for God's glory. That offering was the more excellent sacrifice and God approved it.

Religious freedom was henceforth to be the watchword throughout our land and the principle upon which a new nation was to be built.

Under its influence social life was to develop. Men were to be made better and the race was to be lifted higher in the scale of being. Human life upon this continent was to experience a grand development—an evolution toward a more exalted sphere of manhood and true living.

The last Sabbath of that voyage was spent upon the vessel in holy worship. Earnest, fervent prayers were offered. Hymns of praise were sung and covenants with God were renewed.

> "Amidst the storm they sang,
> And the stars heard, and the sea,
> And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
> To the anthems of the free."

The Pilgrims are dead. The *Mayflower's* little company all sleep along the shores of their new world home. But the songs which awakened the echo upon that wintry Sabbath morning are still floating through the forests and over the hills and plains of our land in unison with the song of peace and good will to men. They being dead yet speak. The music of that grand chorus rings in our ears to-day! And down in the future when the singers

are forgotten, it will still have its influence as an educating power among the masses.

The landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock in 1620, and upon that solid foundation, dedicating themselves and the land of their adoption to God, was a landmark from which we can not depart without danger.

Religious freedom having been secured, the desire for political emancipation followed as a consequence. A spirit of independence and self-reliance, engendered by the situation, fostered by the times and intensified by the circumstances, passed as an inheritance to the generations which preceded the Revolution. During these years of probation the problem of self-government was gradually working itself out to a successful solution in the minds and hearts of the people. When the rupture with Great Britain came, the country was not unprepared for the issue. The same trust in God which gave inspiration to the Pilgrims at Plymouth, gave wisdom and determination to the Continental Congress and gave courage and hope to the Continental army. A praying general led the American forces. A devout spirit pervaded the national legislature and gave dignity and force to its deliberations. The framers of the Declaration expressed their reliance upon

Divine Providence for the support of their principles. It was again the more excellent sacrifice by which the young nation obtained the witness and secured success for our arms. This was God's country from the beginning; and upon this soil, if we are faithful to our trust, will be demonstrated the great emancipation that some day shall usher in the millennium.

The dead past may bury its dead issues, but living men, imbued with the spirit of patriotism, will press on to greater heights and nobler achievements, while the dead who have fallen in the cause of man will march shoulder to shoulder with those who are foremost in the fight. The dead of the revolution still speak for freedom and for God. Peace was established and the government was reconstructed. The thoughts of men fell into harmony with the genius of our institutions, while the country assumed a high place among the nations of the earth.

Still something was wanting to make our offering complete and to render our sacrifice acceptable to God. Liberty had but half a meaning. All were not free upon our soil. The bondman had come down to us as an inheritance, and he was still in chains. The Declaration was not for him, while

the Constitution was only for his master. Slavery was an institution of other days, before the spirit of the Declaration had become an element in the domestic life of the people. Unfortunately it survived both the Declaration and the Constitution. Under the genial warmth of a Southern sun it flourished and grew into alarming proportions. It became the cherished institution of the Southland and began slowly to coil itself like a deadly serpent for a spring at the life of the Union. "The South has never been wronged by the North," said Governor Pickens, of South Carolina. "Our claim of grievance is but a pretense. We can not live together. Our institutions are at variance. If slavery must continue to us, we must dissolve the Union of the States." The North had long before realized the danger and sought to avert it by moral forces and æsthetic teachings. The policy was too mild to be effective. The fetters of the black man were too strongly riveted to be broken or severed by anything but the blows of the hammer and the fires of the furnace. The wrong was deep-seated and obstinate. It was a crime against justice and liberty which civilization could only expiate by blood. The trouble culminated in 1861 when the country was

startled by the booming of hostile cannon in Charleston Harbor.

The nation was now called to account for its sins —sins of commission upon the part of the South, sins of omission upon the part of the North. It was the voice of our brothers' blood calling to heaven for redress. It was in vain that we pleaded that we were not our brother's keeper—that we had no Constitutional right to interfere with the rights of the South. Our clear duty had always been to proclaim liberty throughout the land; but we stood and saw the portals of the temple closed against a proscribed and downtrodden race. The decree had gone forth that henceforth the doors must be open to all; and if not opened by the key of justice they must be forced by the sword.

The storm had broken upon us. The cloud came from the South and not from the North. The North had never been aggressive except by speech and pen. It was now compelled to take up arms to defend its own life. It was not because the South had been wronged, but because the slaveholder believed that slavery and freedom stood in such antagonism to each other, that the two systems could not be administered upon the same soil and by the same law-making power. and that unless a separa-

tion could be forced slavery would have to go down before an advancing civilization.

It was then that the sacrifice offered by the North obtained the witness of the righteousness of its cause. The South came to the sacrifice offering upon its altar the unrequited toil of its enslaved millions. It brought the products of its servitude and offered the unholy fruits of secession. It lighted its fires with the coals of sectional hatred and from the blazing torch of war. The North came with the products of free labor and lighted its altar fires from the torch of liberty. It came with its offering of free education for all, with equal privileges under the law and with that potential weapon of the free man—a free ballot. If Abel's sacrifice obtained the witness that was righteous, then the sacrifice of the North with the Proclamation of Emancipation of January, 1863, the grandest document of its kind in all history, and the greatest triumph of modern civilization, was such an act of supreme righteousness as to give the North the witness of all the ages that shall hereafter come and go. Being dead, the generation which achieved such important results shall speak on as long as suns shall rise and set.

In that memorable struggle were born new impulses and holier ambitions in the hearts of the

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American people. The sacrifice was one of much blood. The death angel passed through the land and into nearly every household, and smote, not only the first born, but in many cases whole families of brave boys. Before me are men who know the truth of these utterances. Forty years tell that they lived through the time when martial music filled the air and armed battalions marched through our streets and into the field, in defense of the land they loved and the institutions they were determined to preserve undefiled.

They were imbued with the spirit of the martyred Lincoln when he said, "Without contemplating consequences, before high heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love." They were honorable wounds which tell of their participation in the great strife. They offered their lives without reserve and placed their all upon the altar of the country. Christ said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

You offered yours, and by your side in the strife many a brave comrade fell and found his grave upon the battlefield. Greater love hath no man shown for his country than this. None with greater

loyalty have ever given their lives for their fellow-men.

From their graves, being dead, they speak to us to-day. They speak to us through the history of their deeds and daring. They speak to us through the loving memories which the living have cherished for their patriotism. They speak to us through the Grand Army of the Republic, which after the war brought the veterans of the land and sea into closer comradeship and preserved among their archives the traditions of the campfire and the march, of the bivouac and the fight. You, my comrades, even with silent tongues, are speaking eloquently to the country in your daily lives and in the abiding loyalty, that as veterans and survivors of the war you inspire in the souls of the present generation of young men.

Your sacrifice has been offered in your own bodies and in the firstlings of your flocks. It has been acceptable to God and your country has imputed it to you for righteousness. You are resting now from the fatigues and dangers of the campaign; but while you rest you are reaching forward to new conquests, you are moving forward a conquering army in the departments of peace.

The Grand Army speaks to the people, not only

through the influence of its organization of living members, but through its dead who fought under the banners of the great armies of the North, but did not survive the war. What a mighty voice speaks from our national cemeteries and from the lone grave of the dead soldier by the wayside! What potent influences are going up from the many fields that the war drenched with human blood! Silently the grass may grow over these fields and plentifully the grain may yield its wealth to the garner, while the glad husbandman sings his harvest home; but the memory of what was done there will never fade. Though centuries of peace may roll over these fields they will not be forgotten, for to all time, they will be hallowed spots where for every drop of blood that ebbed from the faithful soldier's heart, there will spring up a new germ, in some living heart, as a safeguard to Republican institutions. Our boys, who read the history of their heroism, and who may some day tread with pilgrim feet over these memorable spots, as they recall the sacrifice, will drink in fresh inspirations of patriotism and will receive new courage to emulate their example in defense of country, flag, and home. These dead heroes, as well as the living comrades, speak to us to-day, not of strife but of harmony, not of war but of peace.

It is true that the signs of the times point to many a hard contest in the early coming days; but they will be the battles of mind grappling with the great problems that the rapidly changing panorama of our national growth are continually forcing upon our attention. They are not to be decided by the sword upon new fields of blood, but within the legislative arena where stronger and abler men must be sent, fully endowed with cultivation, ability, and sound judgment to oppose mind to mind, reason against fallacy, and moral courage in opposition to political chicanery.

The signs of the times also point to the significant fact that some time in the future, and probably not so far off as it now seems, "Nation shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This is one of the glorious fruits that the Grand Army of the Republic has brought for its offering. Fresh from the field where the sword had steeped itself to the hilt in blood, and where human glory, if such there be in war, had drained the cup to intoxication, a victorious army quietly grounded its arms, and, taking up the pursuits of domestic life, turned its weapons into plowshares and pruning hooks, and prepared the once

field of death for a gracious harvest of the fruits of peace.

Soon the last comrade of the Grand Army must fall; but the organization will live on in the work it has done; and the dead soldier will speak to the future as he speaks to-day, breathing new life into the generations of young men as they shall march to the front in the management of the great political interests of the country. In the war the comrades that compose the Grand Army fought the battles for our Union. Since peace was declared under their fraternal organization they have fought the battles of the coming centuries by demonstrating that pacific organization and good citizenship can not only repair the ravages of war, but can build up a nation upon a more solid and enduring basis than upon warships and arsenals. Yours has been the more acceptable offering; and from your altar fires sweet incense arises to heaven. The gleams of its flames are your campfires and are the beacon-lights of emancipation and liberty to all the world. When the last prayer shall be said over the last dead comrade and the last requiem shall be sung over his grave, he will still speak to the living both of the past and the future. His voice will be heard in the loyalty of his children and in their devotion

to the old flag. It will be heard in the better and ever-improving free education to the masses and in the more exalted national virtue which springs from the performance of noble deeds and in the living of good lives.

To-day the nation weeps over its dead and strews flowers upon their graves. But the air is full of song and the household is full of rejoicing in remembrance of the blessings, which, through their lives, an honorable peace has brought to our doors. Long may the flag that they so nobly defended wave over this favored country! Long may the nation's children gather under its folds and fling its colors into the untainted atmosphere of American loyalty! Long may the people shout and rejoice as its every star becomes a star of promise, and its bright stripes, radiant with beauty, shall symbolize the sunrise of universal peace! Comrades of the Grand Army, your mission upon earth has been replete with grand results. May your reward in heaven be as great as your services have been here!

II.

THE SHIBBOLETH OF HUMANITY.

"But the greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii, 13.

When the Gileadites intercepted the Ephramites at the passage of the Jordan, the pronunciation of a single word served to detect the tribal affiliations of the fugitives. In the march of the world towards social perfection, a single principle separates the higher humanity from all the rest, and discloses at once the secret by which hearts have been brought into union and the better parts of our nature developed and adapted to the practical uses of the Gospel of love. The advancement of men from the lowest to the highest forms of civil life has often been marked by the most suggestive antithesis. Love has been born of hatred; order of confusion; freedom of tyranny; liberty of slavery, and peace of war. In all these opposites the watchword of the hour has ever been but the prophecy of the final outcome. These truths can all be traced along well de-

fined lines in the growth of our government and in the unfoldings of our wondrous national life. What means this gathering here to-day but an illustration of what I have just uttered?

These uniforms speak of a strife that has long since ceased; of a war for principle, of fire and smoke and battle where many a brave and gallant life went down for the right, and where the right triumphed; of a bitter and bloody contest, in which FREEDOM was the watchword and where the outcome was three millions of enfranchised lives and as many unclasped shackles. In all these one principle alone embodied the objects of the issue; one battle-cry animated the contending hosts; one Shibboleth detected the enemy in the ranks or at the gates.

Out of that eventful war was born the noble body of true men who stand before me to-day—men who have for their object fraternity, their Shibboleth charity, their battle-cry loyalty—but the greatest of these is CHARITY. It is the great bugle-call to which we are marching to a higher and better life. In the aspiration of the soul toward heaven one single principle, above all others, forms the criterion of certainty by which we know that our feet are treading the straight and narrow way. More than a guiding star, charity (or love) is a sun that brightens

all the world to us, and over the pathway of its rays our weary footsteps travel toward our eternal rest. No wonder that the Apostle Peter, in summing up the Christian graces, said that if we add to them charity we should be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For God Himself is love, and the commandment which Jesus gave to us that we should love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, and minds, and our neighbors as ourselves, was simply a concentration of the highest and most ennobling duties of life into that single word—LOVE.

The definition of charity covers a wide field of meaning. In its ordinary acceptation, and that which first presents itself to our minds, it is almsgiving. But that is only the narrowest ring of an ever-widening circle. In another sense it is benevolence, philanthropy, liberality in relief, kindly judgment of the action and motives of others. It is brotherly love, and, in its brightest sense, love to God. It is the Shibboleth of humanity, recognizing God as our Father and man as our brother. It is the greatest of all the virtues which make up the perfect man. It is the great harmonizer, bringing into accord all contrarieties of our nature and attuning life in this world to the life beyond the grave. The Christian

Church, in its early struggles against both Judaism and Paganism, found itself involved in unprofitable controversies. There were the differences of opinion of the representatives of the various sects whose conversion brought them under the influence of the new doctrine. There were the long-established jealousies among the many nationalities which the Gospel had brought together. There were peculiarities of customs, habits, and thoughts of the people whom the preaching of the Gospel was bringing under the dominion of Christ. The Jew came with all the narrowness of religious formality; the Gentile with wide differences in methods of worship and with a skeptical philosophy difficult of reconciliation with that spirituality which reaches to the profoundest depths of the human heart. It was hard to get away from the temple of idolatry, from the altar of sacrifice, from superstitious reverence for the household gods, and from fear of the unseen power of the earth and air. These and a myriad of other mythical things which occupied the devout mind of the heathen world, still clustered around the domestic and public practices of the people. Christ had introduced a religion of love, and in this fundamental yet all-sufficient virtue the apostle recognized the cementing principle of all social and religious life. Hence-

forth it was to be the battle cry of the Church Triumphant. It was to be the world's watchword towards heaven. It was to become the Shibboleth by which the true men should be distinguished from the false.

Long before Christ came and taught, Cleanthes said: "Love begins with the mother and father; from the family it extends to the village, to the commonwealth, to the people, and it becomes the holy love of the world. From that time man, on account of being a man, is no longer a stranger to another man." His preceptor, Zeno, had said before him, "Love is the god that saves the city." These expressions are bright gleams of light through the clouds of that unsocial heathenism which always regarded the stranger as an enemy. It is evident that the world had never grasped the true idea of charity outside the influence and teachings of Jesus Christ. Look at the world before Christ, under the old dispensation. Look at it wherever imperial authority has swayed the might and power of the sword. Many a great and flourishing city has gone down under the storm of human passion. Many a country, beautiful and productive, has withered and become barren under the trampings of some conquering host. Attila, the scourge of God, said that the

grass could not grow again where his horse had once trod, and, in the fearful destruction that he wrought, his words seemed but too true. Many a nation, reaching out toward power and aggrandizement, has perished in the whirlwinds of jealousy and hatred. Egypt is but the sepulcher of the buried hope of a dead past. Her monuments speak only of death, not life. Her pyramids, the world's wonder, are but the remains and reminders of past slavery and suffering. Every chisel mark speaks of tears and unrequited toil. The Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Jordan now roll their waves through fields of desolation and ruin, where once proud cities with humming industries, and great nations with advanced civilizations, welcomed their overflowing waters.

Even Corinth—proud, beautiful Corinth, to whose people the apostle addressed the Epistle from which our text is taken—Corinth, once wealthy and flourishing; once looking proudly from her rocky heights upon her magnificent double harbors where floated a mighty commerce, her strong citadel frowning over the sea, her people haughty and defiant, had forgotten that the greatest of these was charity. Swallowed up in the vortex of contentions and greed, and worshiping at altars which turned all

hearts to stone, she passed into the silence of forgetfulness, and is no more. A squalid village and a few sad ruins mark the site of her former glory. I look back four hundred years, and, turning my eyes towards the east, see three small vessels coming toward our shores bearing at their masthead the flag of Spain. It is the voyage of discovery. They come to open up a new world; they come for conquest and for spoil. They bring with them avarice and despotic cruelty; selfishness and greed mark their advent, while the same narrow spirit prevails in their descendants of to-day.

I look again, and further northward come other vessels, but now bearing the flag of England. Animated by a higher object, they come for commerce and for trade, but charity is not a part of their cargo. I still look and other vessels come, not for conquest and spoil, not for commerce or trade, but for a still nobler purpose, to worship God with untrammeled conscience; but, alas! to worship under a banner upon which "CHARITY" had not been inscribed. The world had learned a thousand good and valuable things, but it had not learned Christ's lesson of charity.

Love was to be evangel of the new world, the child of a free Church, nurtured in war and adopted

by the Grand Army of the Republic. You will observe that in this connection I am using the term love as synonymous with charity. It was the apostle's meaning. It was the meaning Christ gave to it, and it was the great principle that He wished to instill into Christianity as a saving factor not only to the cause of religion, or in behalf of the human soul, but to all the temporal and political interests of the world. Love was the first lesson taught to man in Eden. It was repeated for him at Bethlehem by the angelic choir in the blessed song of peace on earth, and it was the final legacy left to him on Olivet when the ascending Christ returned to the throne and habitation of His Father.

It is not my intention, to-day, to enter into an analysis of the forces which the inspired apostle marshaled when he drew the climax upon charity and placed it as the capstone to all human virtues. I propose to use the word in its various significations as it may apply to the purposes of the text. So far, I have referred to it as a principle in social development and life, as fellowship, brotherhood, as the cementing influence which binds heart to heart, man to God, and makes God alone the saving element in social and national institutions. It is a little word, but with a world of meaning. It is a monosyllable,

but it represents or expresses the power of God unto individual and national salvation.

Can you imagine what the world would have been, how truly lovely and beautiful, if charity in all its various forms of meaning had been universally practiced among men; and love, like an angel's dream, had imbued man's life with holy joy? How the desolating column of war would have been armed with the implements of peace and would have gone forth to beautify and not destroy! How the fields of carnage would have turned to blossoms and yielded grain to the harvest and ripened its fruit to the autumn and ever smiled at the coming of the springtime! How the besom of destruction, which has so often swept the land with desolation, would instead have swept back to the pit the powers of the evil one and kept the earth sweet and clean as in that hour when "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good!" How brotherly affection would have sanctified the events of each passing day, and, like sweet incense, would have ascended to the eternal throne! But to-day earth is not a paradise. Since the hour that the flaming sword was placed at the east of the garden, no nation has ever reached the perfection of its ideal, for all have lacked the essential element of charity and

all else has profited them nothing. "Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

I verily believe that the Christian world is tending toward this empire of universal love. As new avenues of knowledge are being opened the world is growing better. Some new revelation every day gives to us a clearer and higher conception of the teachings of the Master. Our souls expand with widening thought and the human mind ever stretches out further and further toward the Infinite. Once in the history of the nations every stranger was regarded as an enemy. Now Christ's kingdom reaches out the hand of fellowship to all the nations of the earth, and says to them: "Come and partake with us freely of the waters of life." Once punishment for crime meant human vengeance against the wrongdoer, but God said: "Vengeance is mine," and nations, enlightened by the Gospel, learned to temper mercy with justice. The Christian world has compassion for the guilty one, and Christ, through His blood, offers redemption for his repentance. The

prison door may be closed and securely locked, yet mercy holds open the wicket of hope and the prisoner may, if he will, look out into the waiting eyes of love. Love is the fulfilling of the law.

> "'T is humble love
> And not proud science keeps the door of heaven.
> Love finds admission where proud science fails."

It is this love or charity which brings us into living personal contact with each other. The world knows us and we know the world only by that personal touch which completes the electric current of the soul, and sends swelling and surging through the union of hearts that life current which vitalizes the moral and religious sympathies of the world. Our mutual sensibilities can not be learned from books. The knowledge of others—of human nature acquired only in the library—is not a living comprehension of the real man. It is but the effigy, the marble statuary of the sculpture gallery, beautiful, symmetrical, perfect in art, but stone—hard, cold, lifeless, a representation and not a reality. There is no soft flesh yielding to the touch, no nerves of sensation responding to the slightest contact, no warm blood flowing from a sympathetic heart carrying animation into every fiber, no soul looking out from the eyes or speaking from the tongue, no af-

fections sending forth the electric spark of love to light the whole world with the glow and warmth of humanity. We can learn men only by associating with them, by exchanging thoughts with them, by securing their confidence in return for ours, by reaching out the helping hand in their needs or by grasping their stronger hold when we ourselves are sinking.

Charity is the inspiriting force which animates us in our intercourse with the world. We misunderstand our fellows because we do not know them. We misconstrue their motives because we do not understand them. We fail in our efforts to help or do them good because we do not bring ourselves into touch or accord with them. We deny to them the attributes of a God-given manhood, and then endeavor to bring their discord into harmony. If we would succeed with men we must find out and understand the good that is already in them. This goodness must be rendered purer by attuning it to the more perfect teachings of the Gospel: while, at the same time, all the unharmonious parts of character must be brought into accord with the principles of the higher life. Ruskin says that all one's life is a music if one touches the notes rightly and in time. Surely all our lives in this world may daily be made

to vibrate to the music of heaven and to command the ear of the Father, if love shall be the key and charity the theme of all our personal ministrations. It would, if we had time, be curious to trace the evolution of charity from early patriarchal life along through the rise and fall of nations to the institution of our own nation, founded upon the advanced principles of civil and religious liberty, a system involving the most exalted conceptions of charity, love to God as our Father, and love to our fellow-man as our brother. This principle is bringing men nearer to each other and drawing humanity closer to God. It is this idea of liberty founded upon love which God seems to have made the special mission of the people of America to uphold.

How the great heart of the world yearned for this liberty. Through the centuries it appeared as but a little star in the vast firmament, yet something in the brightness of its beams always attracted the attention of men toward it. Still it rose higher and higher and shined brighter and brighter until the oppressed of the nations began to inquire, "Will it ever give light to all the earth?" Men affected to admire, but how little did they comprehend that light, or understand the meaning of its brightness, or grasp the import of that word liberty! It was

indeed to unshackle the captive and let the oppressed go free. It was to take the whip from the hands of the task-master and reward the laborer with the product of his own hands. It was to lift the oppression which ground out men's lives and give them freedom in the choice of occupation and of employer. Men did not stop or care to think that it was more than these; that it meant citizenship and individual sovereignty; that it meant education for the masses and an equal chance in life for the man who honestly earned the bread he ate with him to whom accident or fortuitous circumstances had given wealth and who affected the inherited right to command and govern.

And yet it meant still more. It meant untrammeled manhood for those who would aspire to it. It meant God likeness to those who would comply with the conditions and receive it. Christ, with His new doctrine, brought yet a higher liberty to the oppressed—the liberty of love. This was the divine empire in which Christ asserted His dominion when He drove the money changers from the temple and declared that it was a house of prayer and not a den of thieves. He proved the majesty of that dominion in the course of His ministry, when, at His word, the dead came back to life, the sick were healed, and

the sinner was forgiven: when childhood was exalted to a share in the kingdom of heaven, and a whole code of ethics was embodied in the single injunction, "to do to others as we would have others do to us." Spiritual liberty came with Christ's preaching of the Gospel, but it flowed along in an oft-interrupted stream until the Reformation, when its swelling waves broadened and rolled onward until they touched the shores of the new world at Plymouth.

But spiritual liberty, founded upon the New Testament doctrine of charity, had never been and was not even then, fully understood and practiced by the Christian Church. Forms and ceremonies, human creeds, man-made doctrines and spiritual selfishness, all inconsistent with the spirit of love, served to separate the Church into discordant families, with some ties of relationship but few of direct brotherhood. We may never expect to conquer the world until we lay our differences by, and under the one banner of love combine our forces for effective and final work. There was much that was good in the Pilgrim faith, but the essential element—charity—was imperfectly developed. Still, the lesson was not lost. Liberty of soul, body, and thought became in time the watchword of the American Revolution. It fired the patriotism of the people and effectually

separated the two classes, those that adhered to the old government and honored the king and obeyed the parliament of England from those who believed in both spiritual and political emancipation. It was love coming in the front, love which regarded all men as brothers. Although, as a nation, we recognized freedom as the underlying principle of all political perfection, we have not always kept in mind that the greatest principle of all in action, or of government, either human or divine, is charity.

Despite our splendid achievements in council and in field, we forgot that liberty was for the dark-hued sons of a proscribed race. We still cherished in our midst the curse of African slavery. Another forward step was needed and emancipation became the shibboleth of rebellion. Slavery had become a moral and political reproach. The spirit of our institutions said that all men were born politically equal and should be free. The South replied "Not so; the children of Ham are born servants and have no political rights!" Charity seemed not for them. Slowly but surely the New Testament doctrine of love had taken deep root in the Northern heart, and that liberty, born of love, demanded that the evil should be removed. Hatred, maddened by selfishness and greed, made war upon principle, but in the conquest the

right triumphed. The arbitrament of battle decided the momentous question, and over the Southland, as over the North, the banner of freedom waved protection to all alike. The distinction between master and slave was merged into individual emancipation and political equality before the law.

Out of that war came that great organization of loyal and true men, the Grand Army of the Republic, whose thirty-ninth anniversary we this year celebrate. From the storm and fire of the battlefield they came, with broken ranks and tattered banners, but came triumphant with undaunted hearts and determined purposes. The principles for which they fought were never to be forgotten. The nation which they had saved was still to be preserved. The memory of comrades who fell by their sides and died upon the field, were to be forever cherished. The widows of their honored dead were to be forever cared for, and their fatherless children were to be educated. The old companionships of camp and field were to be solidified into enduring form, and so they came together under the grand principles of Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty, and throwing their standard to the breeze, have, for thirty-nine years, marched forward honoring their country and honored and beloved by their countrymen. How signifi-

cant is their motto. Fraternity looks to the Post-room, and is the tie which binds them in union of heart and purpose. The ancients represented friendship as a young man in full vigor, bare-headed, and meanly attired. Upon the outside of his garments was written "To live and die;" upon his forehead, "In summer and winter;" his breast was open and with his finger he pointed to the inscription upon his throbbing heart, "Far and near." Such should be the character of our fraternity. Neither life nor death nor season nor distance should be able to change it. It should be deep and firm and wide-spread like the roots of the oak of a thousand years. Charity looks backward to their honored dead and to the graves over which the flowers never wither and to a memory that never fades. And then it looks forward to their families keeping want from the threshold and training their children to useful and honored lives. Loyalty looks to the country and its institutions, teaching to all a noble love for the old flag and making civil and religious liberty the watchword for all coming time.

But the greatest of these principles is charity. Fraternity is for to-day and to-morrow. It is the social bond of brotherhood. It is a chain, the links of which are one by one broken by death, and when

the last link is severed, a life of precious memories will perish forever. We may be individually remembered for a short time by relatives and friends who have come to us since the recollections of the war were created, but they, too, will die and their remembrance of us will be buried with them in the grave. Our names may live in history, but that personal contact which makes fraternity holy will have passed away beyond recall. Loyalty is for the present and the future. It is patriotism crystallized into the solid duties of citizenship. It is that principle which holds the Constitution and the flag dearer than life. It is that which makes the patriot, the soldier, and the hero.

Loyalty is the great object of our solicitude and teaching. We look behind us and see danger encountered and overcome. We look around us and behold threatenings on every side. We look before us and see darkening clouds rising in the distance. But we still our hearts and say our example and our teachings are not forgotten. As long as the Grand Army of the Republic lives and its battle-scarred flags still hold together, the nation will not want a defender. We call our young men to us and say, "Behold a country worth fighting and worth dying for!" We point them to a hundred hard-

fought fields with proud monuments of granite inscribed all over with the record of noble deeds, and say, "See what your fathers have done for republican institutions" and bid them emulate their virtues and their deeds! We say to the children of our schools, "You belong to God and your country. Never permit a disloyal thought to enter your minds. Never let a spot from your hands stain the old flag. Never let the wrong triumph at the cost of the right. Give to your government an example of the purest loyalty. Throw your lives into the breach when necessary, and seal your devotion with your blood!"

Charity! Ah, that is the glorious outcome of all our works. "The greatest of these is charity?" It comprises the devotion and love which give life to our fraternity. It is that which makes our union sweet and pure and holy. Without it we should close the doors of our Post-rooms and write upon them "Ichabod"—the glory is departed. Without charity, loyalty would be a shadow, a myth, for it means to all the nation love for the Stars and Stripes; love for the Constitution and laws; love for civil liberty and for God. To us it signifies exalted brotherhood, a fraternity as constant in storm as in sunshine, a confidence as strong under the blackest darkness as in the brightest light—a friend-

ship that no calumny can weaken, no shadow tarnish, no evil or misfortune dissolve. With us it means a liberal hand always open to the wants of surviving comrades and to the needs of the widows of our dead, an ear sensitive to the cry of childhood, a heart responsive to the wail of woe or suffering.

Mohammed said: "Every good act is charity." Your smiling in your brother's face is charity. An exhortation to your fellow-man to virtuous deeds is equal to almsgiving. Your putting a wanderer in the right road is charity; your assisting the blind is charity. A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to his fellow-man. When he dies people will say, "What property has he left behind him?" But the angels will ask what good deeds he has sent before him. Our mere professions may place the Grand Army before the world for what it is not. Our action, based upon love, will place us, both before the world and ourselves, for what we really are. If we have not love all else is vain, we are but a "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." We should know ourselves as we desire that others should know us. Christ once asked His disciples, "What do the world say that I am?" and they answered, "Some say, John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." The

world did not know Him and misunderstood His ministry. But He asked the disciples who had lived with Him, who had been taught by Him and understood Him best, "But whom say *ye* that I am?" and Simon Peter answered, "Thou art Christ, the Son of God." Ah, blessed knowledge! received through the revelation of the Father.

Shall we be so understood by the nations? The world will and often does misunderstand us, and those near to us will also misunderstand us unless by our works we make ourselves known to them. But if we would be known by others we must first strive correctly to estimate ourselves. Whatever in our lives or character or works we can not commend to others we will surely find detrimental to ourselves. Our mission to the nation is that of loyalty. Our mission to the people is that of love. When the nation is asked who we are let our lives bring out the response, "They are the loyal sons of the Government." When the people are asked who we are, let a million of loving hearts answer, "They are our truest friends," and when the stranger inquires of us, who we are, let us point to our noble works of charity and say, "These speak for us!"

And yet another step must be taken before our duty is complete. We must extend our love to God

and learn to know Him as He is, so that when He may put the question of our knowledge of Him to our hearts, we may be able to answer, "Thou art my Lord and my God!

Then will heaven's choicest blessings crown the life of every comrade and rest upon the Grand Army of the Republic forever.

Comrades, have you sought the favor of the Master? Have you brought your hearts as a sacrifice to His altar? Have you yielded your lives in loyal service to the dominion of the Prince of Peace? He demands of you this day this consecration. He loves you for your soul's worth and earnestly invites you to come to Him. He honors you for your devotion to your country's cause and desires you to be partakers of His throne. He commends your fraternity. He approves your loyalty, but says to you this morning, "Add to them God's love, for charity is greater than all other virtues combined."

III.

HONORABLE SCARS.

"I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."—GAL. VI, 17.

THIS is the language of a wholly consecrated man: one who had devoted his life to the service of his Master, and who gloried in the evidences that he had suffered for his Master's sake. Forms and ceremonies, outward professions and meaningless rites were no part of the apostle's religion. His Master had established a religious creed broad enough for all and capable of universal application. It was simple, it was effective. It commended itself to enlightened men and was fully adapted to human needs. Christ summed it up in a few words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." To this Master Paul had bound himself, and to His religion he had consecrated his life. It needed no outward demonstration to convince the Master of the fidelity of His servant. The figure in the text doubtless refers to the an-

cient custom of branding slaves, not only that their subjection might be recognized by the multitude, but that their ownership might be proved by a glance at the stigmata or mark of servitude that had been pricked or burned upon the body.

Slavery always meant subjection, but did not always indicate degradation. Under the ancient system, prisoners of war were sold into slavery. Many of them were of refined, educated, and high-born families. Æsop, whose fables have for ages charmed and instructed the race, was a slave. Epictetus, whose pure system of practical morality so largely influenced the philosophy of his time, was a slave. And others who have rendered great service to the world, were once bondsmen to masters who had acquired ownership through the exigencies of war. Paul was not a slave in any sense of that word. He was a servant, it is true, but his servitude consisted of spiritual subjection to the will of the living God. By natural endowment he was one of nature's noblemen, by birth a Jew, by adoption a Roman citizen, by religious faith a Pharisee. Tarsus, his native city, was celebrated for its learning, and it was probably here that he became versed in Greek literature and imbued with the faith of the Pharisees. The Jews were largely divided into two

principal religious sects, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, differing widely in their doctrines. The Sadducees followed a negative and speculative faith. They accepted the books of Moses, but denied the traditions; they believed in God, but denied the resurrection of the body and the existence of a future state. They believed in loving obedience to God, but taught that man had been endowed with absolute control over his own actions. They were a sect of religious aristocrats, gathering around their altars the wealthy, the indolent, and the easy-going time-servers of the Hebrew faith.

The Pharisees, upon the other hand, were spiritual aristocrats, arrogating to themselves the only true worship. They were remarkable for their zealous support of the traditions of the elders. They believed in the resurrection of the dead, in spirits and angels, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. They called to their communion the more humble classes, and, through the adaptation of their faith to the common thought, they easily led the popular belief. Politically, they were intensely patriotic, respecting authority, upholding the law, and loyally believing in Jewish infallibility. The foundation of their religion, as well as their national creed, was derived from the words of the Talmud,

"The good Pharisee is he who obeys the law because he loves the Lord." God was with them, as with us, the "All Father." Between them, and their brethren of the faith, the great equity of living was, "Do unto others as you would be done by." They were essentially the representatives of all that was good in the Hebrew faith. Christ called them hypocrites, not because of what they believed, but because their practices were so greatly at variance with their teachings. They were the acknowledged interpreters of the law, and, though not forming a separate political party, were among the most powerful civil leaders of their times.

It was to this latter sect that Paul belonged. He styled himself, "a Pharisee, son of a Pharisee." Paul studied law at Jerusalem, under the preceptorship of Gamaliel, a learned jurist and eminent Jewish rabbi. From the high priest he obtained a commission, and, thus armed, with an acquaintance with the law and with authority from the civil powers, he went forth to detect and punish the disciples of the new faith.

The importance of his mission, his prominence as a rising man, the authority with which he was clothed, made him widely known and feared throughout the land. In all this God was preparing him for his great mission to the Gentile world, and

was laying, through him, the foundation for a faith that for eighteen centuries was to march triumphantly to the conquest of men's hearts, a faith that should grow stronger through persecution, become more aggressive through fiery opposition, appeal more effectively to men's lives through its wounds and scars, and eventually carry its triumphant banner to the uttermost parts of the earth, for

> "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
> Does his successive journeys run."

Paul unconsciously received his first lesson upon the living and surviving power of honorable wounds, typical, indeed, of the marks which were to speak from his own body, when the clothes of Stephen were laid at his feet, while he witnessed the cruel mob with stones inflict the death wounds; wounds which, to the present hour, throw a halo around all martyrdom for the truth's sake. Paul could not see behind the shadow of the future, but God was there "keeping watch above His own." Stephen's life was in his keeping, and God was holding it for the instruction of future generations. "He being dead, yet speaketh." Honorable wounds, glorious scars, indelible marks which tell the story of devotion and heroism as no written history can tell it. Sur-

rounded by danger and persecution, facing an excited and threatening multitude, defiant before the maddened onslaught of hatred and wickedness, the heroic disciple raised the standard of eternal truth and stood ready to die for the Master's sake and sealed that devotion with his blood; with every opening wound speaking eloquently for the future triumphs of the Gospel, with his life blood gushing in crimson streams which tinged the cloudlets of the closing day with their reflected brightness, giving earnest for a brighter dawning on the morrow, he passed to his reward, crying with his expiring breath, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Centuries have come and gone, but those marks of the Lord Jesus are not forgotten, and many a victim of persecution has passed through the fire, gathering strength and courage from the wounds and blood of the first martyr. The standard, which was not lowered with the fall of its bearer, still floats aloft, with millions of brave hands ever ready to hold it up.

I am speaking to men to-day who can appreciate this beautiful figure,—men who have followed their country's flag upon the march, and who, in the midst of privation and discouragement, have been cheered and animated by its emblematic beauty, as it waved

its graceful folds under the skies about the camp ground,—men who have followed that banner into the battlefield and have rallied round it, at many a point in the midst of the fight, where Death was swinging his scythe with awful carnage, and who have defiantly flaunted it in the enemy's face, turning back the impetuous charge and carrying signal defeat into their overconfident ranks. Many an armless sleeve, many a missing leg, many a sightless eye, many a crutch, and many a scar attest your love for that old flag and your devotion to your country's cause. You are here to-day upon this peaceful camping ground because you were here when the tumult of war wakened the echoes and shook the earth in that terrible strife which laid low the sleeping thousands in these peaceful graves: because you were upon other battlefields which drove back the tide of rebellion against a righteous government: because you stood upon the blue field of constitutional fidelity, under the brightest stars of heaven's glorious promise of liberty, in defense of the emblematic stripes of union, against the inauspicious stars of evil omen and the symbolic bars of human bondage: because, through your loyalty, that liberty which was once proclaimed throughout all the land still survived.

From brave and loyal men, whose bodies bear such honorable scars, I am sure that it is not too much to ask that you rally round the banner of the cross of Christ as loyally as you have rallied around the glorious banner of your country. During the war, the State military agent at Nashville, passing by the Post Hospital, stopped to hear a voice from within singing the familiar words,

"Rally round the flag, boys."

The agent remarked to a nurse standing in the doorway, "That patient is quite merry. He must be recovering." "You are mistaken, sir," was the reply, "he is dying. I am his nurse and the scene so affected me that I was obliged to leave the room." Stepping into the ward, he found the singer just struggling with death. As his voice grew more feeble, he poured forth from his patriotic soul the words that had so often cheered him on the march and in the fight, "rally once again," and, as he sank back into his death slumber, his last words, which came incoherently, were, "The flag, boys." As he passed with his colors into the ranks upon the other side of the river, a score of voices from his sick and wounded comrades, joined in that grand old hymn,

"Am I a soldier of the cross?"

The harmony of the singing was mingled with sympathetic sobs and tears from a hundred bystanders, who never forgot the loyal singer or his wounds. Over that death scene, loyalty to the Union was again and again pledged and strengthened. Paul was loyal to his religion as, in his interpretation, it became to him the will of his Master. His conversion was unexpected by him and was as remarkable as it was sudden. Convinced of the miraculous power which laid him prostrate upon the earth, and realizing that God had spoken in the voice that came to him, he at once inquired the Divine will and turned obediently to do as God directed. Henceforth worldly honor was to be cast behind him. His learning, his religious zeal, his natural force of character, his great genius, were all passports for him to the highest social and political positions among his countrymen. His birth and citizenship, his profession as a lawyer, entitled him to privileges with which but few of his people were favored. Now the world had suddenly changed to him. Another field, in which the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers few, a mission of much work, but of little worldly profit. In place of honor, he was to find contempt. Instead of reward, he was to receive persecution and stripes. In lieu of a master, he was to be a servant.

In place of being an influential lawyer, he was to be the advocate of an unpopular cause. His life was to be of little value to himself, but it was to be of immense importance to others. His servitude was not of dishonor. The marks of that servitude, the scars of his scourging, the wounds of his maltreatment, were to become a record from which the world was to compile the most remarkable of all its cherished histories, a record from which was to be taught the great object lesson of the centuries through which men were to be lifted nearer to God. Henceforth, faith was to have a deeper significance. Fidelity and loyalty were to receive a higher meaning. The foundation principles of human justice, "Do unto others as you would have them do to you," was to have a Divine rather than a human interpretation. It was to be equitable, it was to be reciprocal, it was to be fraternal and Godlike.

The path of duty once clearly opened before him, Paul was never to turn back. No matter what barriers were raised against him by his personal enemies or the foes of his cause, he was to be steadfast and immovable. He had given himself to Christ without reserve, and his powers were consecrated to the cross of the Redeemer. The language of the text is that of a glorious retrospect of one who

gloried in the honorable marks of an important and successful campaign, one who had fought a good fight and for whom the reward was already prepared. Paul, from the experience of his former antipathies, had doubtless anticipated some suffering for his Master's cause, but its fearful extent had not been revealed to him. He had been converted and entered upon his warfare like one who had not only raised his colors, but had nailed them to the mast; one with whom the issue must be victory or death. "I live for Christ; if need be I die for Him."

The mark which the master branded upon the slave was ineffaceable. It must be carried with him to the end of life as a badge of servitude. Paul had entered the divine service and at once clearly displayed the willingness of his submission in his speech and upon his character and in his daily walk, but henceforth he was to bear the marks of that submission upon his body. He carried his colors into the face of danger but he was not to escape from the conflict without scars. Once he was ambitious of worldly distinction. He had doubtless looked up from his seat at the feet of Gamaliel in proud anticipation of the honors of an exalted professional life. He possibly imagined a future where he should command and others should obey, when everywhere

he would be welcomed as among the great ones of the earth. In these flattering dreams, so common to early manhood, he had not fancied the real future through which he was destined to journey. He could not foresee that at Iconium he would be persecuted, or that at Lystra the fickle crowd would offer him divine honors and afterward stone him nearly to death, that at Philippi they would beat him, or that at Melita he should be shipwrecked, and that at Rome he should be imprisoned, and perhaps martyred.

In God's plan for the reclaiming of the world this had all been written, and, although hidden from Paul, was being gradually fulfilled. After many of these things had been realized in Paul's experience, when, wounded and scarred, he had become a prisoner at Rome, and when some of the Churches for which he had faithfully labored had forgotten his teachings and become recreant to their trust, he calls them to account for their unfaithfulness. To the Galatians, he writes a reproachful letter because they had departed from the Gospel doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, a doctrine for which he had fought and suffered for his Master and for which he now "bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

Let us turn for a few moments to this question of suffering. We can not comprehend its import; we suffer and we complain and murmur. The wisdom of it is not always manifest to us. Its distress and painfulness are abundantly realized by us, but its utility is clouded with uncertainty. The problem of evil and the mystery of suffering have always been puzzling to human faith. Their attempted solution has sometimes led to distrust and doubt. We are told that suffering is the result of sin: sin against God's laws, sin against natural laws, sin against our own bodies and spirits. We do not easily understand why sin of any kind is permitted to abound and flourish, even against the strenuous efforts of good men to exterminate it. We can not comprehend why the just should suffer because of the sins of the unjust.

I am not here to answer these eager questionings of the human heart. They appear to be a part of God's great plan for wise and holy purposes. "God moves in a mysterious way," and our times are in His hands. The way to glory seems to be through suffering, even as the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. The whole creation groaneth, waiting its deliverance from the bondage of sin. The very earth on which we live has

been rendered habitable for man by terrible convulsions, and by centuries of slow processes, by tearing apart and bringing together under new conditions. Disintegration and restoration; ground up and consolidated and ground up again. The rocky crust of the earth has been bruised and broken until its surface became a fitting place for vegetation, over which seed time and harvest shall alternate until the end of time, when the elements shall again melt with fervent heat. Look up those hill-sides and down these valleys. Go to the Western Sierras, whose tall peaks reach the heavens. Go to our great Northern and Southern plateaus, those thousands of square miles of land which have lifted bodily hundreds of feet above the old surface, and wherever the eye wanders, the scars of the old earth, in its conflict with the early elemental forces, are everywhere visible. How they tell the story of creation just as the finger of the Creator has written it! How they exalt our minds and draw our lives closer to Him whose fiat, "Let there be light," revealed all this grandeur to us! When the Creator saw that His work was good he crowned it with man, and said to him, "Subdue the earth and have dominion over it."

Man stood in Eden in sinless simplicity and grandeur. He was a monarch in a realm as pure

and holy as the heavens prepared for the future abode of the righteous. The beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, were given him as a heritage. His abode was paradise, a place so beautiful and lovely as to be typical of heaven. In the midst of the garden stood a tree that was good to look upon, its fruit was good for food. Ah, it was more. God had said of it, "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." Why not? Here was a test of man's fidelity. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But what is death? It had not come into the world. Here was the problem. It was a tree to be desired to make one wise. The tempter came and said, "Ye shall not surely die; eat. Your eyes shall be opened; ye shall be as God, knowing good from evil." The tempter triumphed and man fell. Man sought to obtain by disobedience what by obedience might freely have been his own. He received a curse in place of a blessing. In consequence of his sin he must now struggle for his bread and eat it in sorrow all the days of his life. Thorns and thistles came forth to wound his hands as he tilled the earth. He began to bear, not the honorable wounds of a righteous warfare, but the marks of ingratitude and disobedience.

Paul's marks were the scars of an honorable conflict. He could exhibit them without shame. He could refer to them with pride; he could contemplate them with satisfaction. They were the marks that the Master would recognize when he came to call together His own.

Let us not forget this lesson in our individual lives. There are marks of honor and marks of dishonor, scars that will commend us and scars that will condemn. We battle for the right and our scars are our glory. We contend for the wrong and its marks become our disgrace. In all the mythologies and theologies of the world, this problem of evil has been prominent. Night has struggled against the day, darkness has opposed the light, evil has sought to vanquish the good. Satan has contended against the Almighty. We have fallen from a high state. How low we have fallen we can not, in our present condition, fully realize. The descent was easy and rapid. How shall he ascend again? Not so easily as he fell. He must toil up the ascent. He must fight his way back. He must suffer. He must receive wounds and scars. The marks of the fire are upon him, but he shall come from the furnace purified from the dross of baser self and more perfect.

We rise also by mental suffering. Losses over

which we sometimes grieve often strengthen our determination and courage to fight a better fight. Bereavements enlarge and broaden our sympathies for the distresses of others. Sorrows, that so often multiply about us, soften our lives and bring us into comforting fellowship with others. Human life is exalted and men are made better and rise higher through their afflictions. When analyzed under the searching test of Gospel chemistry, sufferings are not unmixed evils. They may sometimes leave upon our bodies the undesirable marks of our folly, yet in all the essentials which advance men toward God they unify the race. Human government, the child of aggressive and advancing civilization, has come to its present condition through conflict and sufferings. Enlightened men of all ages have ever seen brighter light ahead. But governments grow slowly. Society advances by painful steps and against fearful opposition from the powers of darkness. Men must fight if they would be free. The wounds and scars received in such a warfare are the highest insignia of honor. No sacrifice is too great for man to make for his fellows as he lifts the world towards truth.

"He is a free man whom the truth makes free," and that which exalts truth is an undoubted instru-

ment of God. The soul that bears the marks of suffering for truth's sake is accepted of God. Such marks were Paul's passports to glory. The early social history of man is a curious and instructive study. Look at him when he dwelt in the caves of the earth and procured his daily food from the precarious fortunes of the chase, and then see him in his present condition of home comforts, with all the appliances of civilization contributing to his wants and necessities. These are wide contrasts, but they truly mark the evolution of man from his lower to his higher estate. Every step of the way has been marked by blood. Nothing has been gained that has not been wrested by force from our lower nature. As great armies have marched back and forth over the earth, so has civilization advanced and retreated, but with every great success always reaching and holding a higher position than before.

The history of our own country is replete with incidents. Every one of these periods has been marked with blood from the earliest Colonial strife down to the great war which forever settled the perplexing question under our Constitution, a war that not only broke the cords of human bondage, but which gave true manhood to the slave. These times of strife and blood have each accomplished a

higher and more permanent purpose than could have been reached by any other means. They have all commenced new periods of more rapid advancement. The actors in the last great struggle alone survive. Other generations have died and passed away. History records what they did. We know the wounds they received. History exhibits to us the scars and the body politic retains the marks as honorable exhibits for our instruction and profit. We know by these marks what they did for us.

I have not attempted to solve the problem of evil, or to explain the mystery of suffering. I refer to these historical incidents and facts to show you that in the order of God's providence they exist for good and wise purposes, which, in His own time, He will make known to us. He is using these scourgings for our benefit and through them He is lifting us up toward Him. They are the lights upon our earthly path which show us the way to higher attainments. Do you want a better proof of these facts than your own agency in the preservation and perpetuation of our own government and the strengthening of its principles and the broadening of its policy? Your own lives have marked an epoch in history such as the world has never experienced within the same limit of years. Prior to the war,

in which you were the actors, the Union was in danger. The country was in a state of transition. The most perplexing question under our Constitution was to be definitely settled, and that settlement meant either a union dissolved or a union strengthened. Long years of discussion had not settled it. Legislation, wise and unwise, only aggravated it. Compromise scarcely afforded temporary quiet. Slavery and liberty were opposites that would never coalesce. Blood only could wipe out the national stain. From Sumter to Appomattox, how the whole land groaned! How the earth drank the blood of loved ones from ten thousand peaceful homes! How bravely young and old offered their lives in defense of that Union, symbolized by the old flag which so peacefully floats to-day! The sacrifice was terrible, but the object was beyond price. It was life for life. It was life for freedom. It was life for one inseparable union of States. It was life for one flag and one country. The thunders of the battles which rent the air during those years of conflict shook the nations, and thrones and kingdoms trembled under the reverberations. Human government the world over learned a lesson and gained an experience in those four years that no century of events had ever imparted before. Look to-day at our working millions, paying homage to the Stars and Stripes, and

saying to the nations with whom we have entered into honest rivalry with our industries, "There is no strife between us. We have neither jealousies nor envies. Come under our flag and its stripes shall represent the union that dwells among us."

See again the visiting thousands who come from afar, as they mingle with our people and observe their prosperity to-day. Follow them as they return to their homes, carrying with them new impressions of our country and of our people, a clearer knowledge of the extent and greatness of our country and its resources, a profound admiration for the peaceful, well-furnished and comfortable Christian homes of our working classes. Listen to their report of what a free and united government can do for the masses who create the governing power, and you will say that this year will be America's benediction to the world. The blessings which are ours to-day have not come through a long reign of peace; for you, my comrades, bear in your bodies to-day the marks of the strife which preserved this nation in its integrity and unity. They are honorable marks of a glorious warfare for the right. Napoleon honored his brave soldiers with badges of distinction. England bestowed medals upon those who contributed to her victories, and these were proudly

worn as evidences that in the day of trial they were not found wanting.

You wear the badge of an honored brotherhood, whose organization was the most remarkable victory of peace in all history. But that badge is more. It is an evidence that you served your country under a patriotic enlistment and an honorable discharge at the termination of your service. It is a mark of distinction that your country not only honors, but loves. But to some who wear the badge are added honors in the wounds they bear, in the speaking scars that tell of conflict, of loyalty, of glorious victory—glorious and honorable marks and scars.

During the war a soldier lay upon his cot in one of our hospitals, just reviving from the sleep of chloroform which had been administered to remove his right arm. He missed it, and lifting the blood-stained sheet, requested that the missing member be shown him. His request was granted and reaching out his left hand he grasped the cold hand of the right, and shaking it cordially, said, "Good-bye, old arm. We have been a long time together, but we must part now. You will never again write a letter to mother or sister, never fire another carbine, nor swing another saber for the government, but I don't begrudge you. You have been torn from my

body that not a single State should be torn from our Union." Glorious marks:

> "They tell of courage never quelled,
> Of duty nobly done,
> Of that dark, awful, lonely death,
> Of everlasting glory won,
> And dearer still, a nation's love."

Paul gloried in the marks of his devotion to the cause of Christ. No sacrifice was too great for him to make. He had formerly persecuted the followers of his present Master under devotion to the old faith, which, from the days of Abraham, had descended along the Hebrew line, with many changes and through many conflicts down to the days of the Messiah. Christ came to introduce a reign of peace, to lay the foundation of a faith which, when universally adopted, would solve the problems of suffering and evil. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill, and bring men back to their true relationship with their Maker. That faith was sealed with Christ's blood. That faith was for you. Under it, for nearly nineteen hundred years, the world has been growing better. Mankind has been growing more fraternal, government more humane, and faith more pure. Paul bore in his body the marks of this faith for his Master's sake. It was because of this faith that you made the sacrifice which bears testimony to your

loyalty. For it you bear honored marks to-day. He says, "As you have been true to your country, so be true to Me. You are Mine. I have bought you with a price. That price was My blood. I was wounded for your transgressions, and by My stripes ye are healed."

I appeal to you as brave men whose courage none can doubt—men who answered their country's first trumpet call to battle, and through fire and smoke and danger fought till the war was over and victory won.

Another trumpet calls. Another banner waves. blood-stained and glorious with victory. An army gathers under it and gives true allegiance to the great Captain—the Lord Jesus. As you answered your country's call, and fought for her safety, answer now the call of the Lord Jesus, and, under His banner, following His leadership, fight and win, and save your souls. Find for sin and death an Appomattox that will open the gates of the New Jerusalem through which you will pass to a reward greater and grander than any yet won on earthly field; and where the heroes and martyrs of all the ages and all the fields of honor will give glad welcome to him, who, having fought the fight and kept the faith, shall bear in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

IV.

KNOWING AS WE ARE KNOWN.

"For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii, 12.

The future is always veiled from us. That which is to come can only be conjectured from that which has gone before. The revelations of every day disclose to us the blighting of many hopes, the frustration of well-matured schemes, and the failure of almost certain expectations. The ruins with which time has strewn the earth all teach us the sad lessons of uncertainty, the weakness of human vision, the immaturity of our acquired knowledge. To-day seems unclouded and positively clear, not only through its own light, but by the reflected light of yesterday; the events of to-morrow will show us that we have only seen through a glass darkly. Every day is but a sequel to the preceding day. Each morning dawns upon the world with a new

light. It comes with its own serene beauty, while, through its sunbeams, play in undulating waves the lights and shadows of the past. Every day is, therefore, a revelation of the meaning of yesterday. It is the key which solves the riddle of what has gone before. It becomes in our life a new chapter in the volume which contains the hidden prophecy of the future.

The apostle, in writing this epistle, seems to have been reviewing his own experience. He goes back to earlier days, considers the unseen things which were before him, and says, "For we know in part, and prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things."

Go back in your own history, a little over forty-two years, and mark the growth and advancement in which you have taken a part. In an incredibly short time you grow from childhood to manhood in the experience of the soldiers. In five years, from quiet citizens, you became veterans, battle-scarred by the enemy, and crowned with honor by your country for valiant service. How quickly it all came; how rapidly it passed. The thunder of the cannon in

Charleston Harbor suddenly awakened the nation from its long repose and dream of peace. War had burst upon us in reality in defense of oppression. The North rose, as a unit, in its enthusiasm to repel the unholy invasion. We would march and fight and conquer. We would hastily invade the South, compel peace, uphold the Constitution, and restore the Union to its former glory. The days came and went, and the war was prolonged. Many a brave comrade fell in the strife, but the strife went on. A hated flag was raised against the Stars and Stripes, and a spurious Confederacy was declared in opposition to the old Union. Our boys grew from youth to manhood, and, as the fathers fell, their sons took their places in the ranks, and still the war went on. The shifting scenes, with the developments of every day, passed before us like a swift-moving panorama. The day, as it went by with its stirring events, seemed clear to us, but the morrow opened our eyes to mistakes and misconceptions and to many things that we had not observed as they passed. Four years of campaigning upon American soil revolutionized the methods of warfare throughout the whole world. The old muskets of our army proved but childish things in the hands of a soldiery that meant to conquer. The great wooden vessels of our

navy, once so formidable, were but shells and toys before even the crudely constructed but more effective vessels which modern mechanical science had created for the emergency.

In its growing experience toward a rapid maturity the nation no longer thought "as a child," but "put away childish things." Iron-clad warships, improved guns of tremendous power, ammunition of wonderful effectiveness, harbor defenses of higher scientific construction, new tactics in army and navy movements, with an advanced civilization behind them all, are clear evidences that to-day is not as yesterday, that the present is better than the past, and that it is an earnest for a still better future. So we grow from childhood to age. So the world grows; so the nation grows—effect following cause, development following experience; growth, development, and maturity succeeding each other through the logical sequence of events. There is nothing as yet perfect in this world. We advance and go backward, then again forward, ever swaying hither and thither, but, like the encroaching waves of the ocean, sweeping further inward with every recurring tide. A human life of fifty or more years witnesses many and wonderful changes, but they glide by us almost imperceptibly with the passing of the hours. It is only as we turn the searchlight of the present back-

ward into history that we realize how far we have come and how much we have accomplished.

I am standing to-night face to face with men who, within the past forty-two years, have lived through the experiences which confirm the truth of what I have said.

Again look back; calm skies, peaceful homes, a prosperous country, a growing nationality with a hopeful future, unclouded, save by the fact that, in the most lovely section of the land, human slavery was made, by the law, to contribute to the individual wealth of the owner. The wise, the humane, and the patriotic men of the nation advocated freedom for all, without distinction of color, one flag for all, one principle for all, under the provisions of a Constitution which declared in its preamble that it was made to "secure the blessings of liberty to us and to our posterity." Then the yoke of thralldom was upon the neck of the black man, then the shackles were upon his limbs, and the fetters upon his heart, while the cruel lash of the task-master's whip drew blood at every stroke, and this in a land boasting of liberty, and among a people inviting the downtrodden and oppressed of all nations to come and dwell with us, and enjoy the blessings of freedom.

Need I recall these things? You listened to the earnest controversy. You witnessed the growing desire for the emancipation of the bondman. You grew up in an atmosphere of pity and humanity, which wafted upon its zephyrs the spirit of '76 with the broad principles of the Declaration to the unrequited laborer of the South. You heard the mutterings of dissent and the threats of resistance from the Southland, and, while you wished for a peaceful solution of the problem, you wondered if in your day it would ever be accomplished, and the stain of slavery be blotted from the page of our future history. And yet, as we review those times, now so far away, we remember, with gratitude to God, that for forty-two years we have listened to the songs of jubilee from the old cabin, while the iron chains of bondage have been turned into the implements of husbandry, or have been left to rust in the furrows of the cotton-field and in the damps of the rice swamp, where they fell at the sound of the great proclamation of emancipation.

So much for the past. The present is reaping a rich harvest from the seed then sown. A new order of things is slowly spreading through the South. The black man is gradually developing his capacity for self-help. As new generations of the freedmen

come upon the stage, and their intellects are vivified by the continued electric touch of freedom, and their lives are animated and inspired by more liberal social environments, a new element will enter into our civilization.

An old adage says that, "A nation is not born in a day." But these changes which you have witnessed, and in which you have been the agents—conditions which your patriotism and valor have established for all time—have passed before you so rapidly and surely as to blend the past with the present, without the aid of prophecy or foresight. When the abolition of slavery was presented to your minds as a possibility, you did not think of bloodshed as a probability. You did not dream that your own arm would carry the musket, and that you would personally encounter the privations and share the dangers of a long campaign, or that you should ever assist in making the mightiest history that the world has ever recorded. Look back to-night, if you will, and see even with the stirring events around you and your personal contact with the facts at the time of their occurrence, whether you were not looking at things through an imperfect medium. You see them now, looking backward, much clearer than you saw them then

The world has not always moved as rapidly as it has moved in our own history, for political progress is proverbially slow. Progress in science and art is slow because it is evolved from peaceful life, and does not depend upon physical forces for its acceleration. We look upon the mighty achievements in which the present rejoices without giving much thought as to how they were brought about through the tardy processes of the past. Nearly one hundred and fifty years ago Benjamin Franklin, by a simple experiment, discovered the identity of lightning with the electric fluid. Tremendous as was its importance, the discoverer but saw through a glass darkly, and the scientific world saw not more clearly. Nearly ninety years passed, and electric science had advanced only to the production of a few scientific toys with which to illustrate some interesting philosophical experiments in the lecture-room. Sixty-eight years ago Morse constructed the first electric telegraph of the world; and, almost with the rapid flash of the subtle fluid, came discovery and invention, until space has been annihilated and the world revolutionized by the multiplying contrivances which minister to our use and comfort. We are overpowered as we stand in the midst of these wonders and in our admiration

exclaim, "What has God wrought?" But so short-sighted is our vision, that to-morrow shall bring something still more wonderful, and the future will put to the blush all that the past has accomplished.

Less than two hundred years ago Newcomer applied the expansive power of steam to the propulsion of machinery. Watt improved upon his invention, while a thousand others have improved upon that of Watt. In our day steam power drives the vast machinery of the manufactories of all nations, while over the land and across the waters the obedient servants of the inventor's creation carry life and merchandise with great speed to the ends of the earth. All these things have passed rapidly before our view almost unperceived, so imperfect is both our insight and our foresight. We only comprehend them as we glance backward at the advancements which have been made. It is in vain that we wonder how the world did so long without the advantages with which we are blessed. It was because the world did not know the need, as we of the present do not know the need, of the hidden things of the future. The activities of to-day are the result of the impulses of yesterday and will have their culmination to-morrow, while it is left for to-morrow to reveal to us what to-day has been.

"The near and future blend in one,
And whatsoe'er is willed is done."

The past, the present, and the future all blend together in the complete picture. They form but one pathway leading from earth to heaven. The light rises at one extreme, twilight is at the other, and the darkness is beyond. They are all one, while each is the interpreter of that which has gone before. The light accompanies us all the way through but our sight is not always receptive and clear. Our eyes are not opened to that which is before us. "The light shineth in the darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not." Such is human life! Such is history! Such is national existence!

Life is always a mystery. No astrologer may cast our horoscope. No one can foretell what the days shall bring forth. So the human life is a logical existence, but it may be lived in a very illogical way. It belongs to God, but it is too often treated as a thing of little value, for which we are never to account. Christ has assured us "that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account in the day of judgment." Childhood is properly occupied with childish thoughts and pleased with childish things. Manhood is for action and for the graver thoughts and nobler deeds which ex-

perience brings with our years and which society has a right to demand from us. Age is for contemplation and counsel. Childhood is the basis upon which we build. We are not to forget its thoughts, its pleasures, or its sorrows. They are always to us lessons of wisdom, but in manhood we put away childish methods of thought and act from motives matured by experience. In age we should neither forget our childhood nor our manhood, but should become as good fruit ripened for the Master's use. If, unfortunately, in our maturer years we are pleased only with childish things, then are we but triflers and shall only know in part, and shall not know as we are known.

Do you remember how General Grant, in the midst of the turmoil of war, never forgot his home nor the loves that gathered round his fireside? Helpless women or desolated homes along his line of march never claimed his protection in vain. Little children always awakened in him the tenderness of the father, and the great warrior was none the less great when he took the children of the enemy's land to his knee or pressed the babe of his childhood to his bosom. The tears that at such times often suffused his eyes were never tears of weakness, but were the overflow of a brave soul allowing the

nobler sympathies of his nature to triumph over the stern duties of the soldier. He had put away childish things, but he had not forgotten the childhood that had laid the foundation for his mature life. And so, in his command, many a brave soldier made himself none the less brave because he looked back with tender thoughts for the wife and babes in the home which he had left to do manly service for his country. The future before him was always uncertain and shadowy, but hope illumined his path as his longing heart went out to his loved ones as he looked backward to the time when they parted, and forward to the wished-for reunion. "Then" and "now" were the moving forces of his thoughts, and nerved his arm to strike a harder blow at disunion, as he looked forward to strike sturdy blows for peace and the Constitution, when the old flag should triumph over wrong and wave its folds again over the right. The light of the past has enabled him, in times of peace, to do valiant service for fireside and the Union, in the ranks of the Grand Army of the Republic, who celebrate these memorial services in commemoration of the heroic dead who gave their lives to preserve an undivided Union.

How faintly all this was foreshadowed in the years of campaigning and fighting from 1861 to

1865. To-day we look back and the incidents, the thrilling scenes, the remarkable events through which we have passed seem to outrival the incredible stories of romance.

On the Christmas-day of 1862 when our troops were opposite Fredericksburg, a rebel picket from the other side of the river called to the Union picket, asking if he would be permitted to return if he came over. "Yes," said our boy in blue, and the rebel came. "Who are you?" was asked. "I belong to the Georgia legion," was the answer. Said one of the Union soldiers, "I met a number of your boys at South Mountain." "Yes," said the rebel, "I suppose that is so, if you were there." A shadow of sadness passed over his face as he remarked, "We left very many of our boys at South Mountain. Poor Will, my brother, was killed there. It was a hot place and we had to leave in a hurry." "That's so, Georgia," was the reply, "you fellows fought well and had all the advantage, but the old Keystone boys pressed you hard. By the way, here is a likeness I picked up upon the battlefield the next morning, and have carried it ever since." The rebel took it, looked at it, and instantly pressed it to his lips, exclaiming, "Mother! O my mother!" When regaining his composure, he said: "Brother

Will carried it and must have dropped it in the fight." He asked the name of the one who restored to him so precious a gift, saying, "There may be peace soon and we may know each other better." He had taken from his pocket a small Bible to write upon the fly leaf the name of his new acquaintance, when one who had taken no part in the conversation cried out, "I know that Book; I lost it at Bull Run." "That 's where I got it," said the rebel, who at once handed it to the rightful owner. Two years before it had been a Christmas gift from a friend, whose name was written upon the blank leaf, and was now, on Christmas-day, restored as a gift doubly precious. The rebel returned to his post to reflect upon the mysteries which obscure our march in the battle of life and the providences which shape our destinies and guide us through the darkness.

"In this sign we conquer; 't is the symbol of our faith
Made holy by the light of love, triumphant over death,
He finds his life who loseth it: forever more it saith,
The right is marching on."

During the war with Mexico two young officers fought bravely in the United States army. Both were graduates of West Point, and both were in the line of promotion. Seven years before the Rebellion broke out one had retired to private life, while the

other remained with the army, and was still rising, with the prospect of high rank. To the one the future was obscure and uninviting, while the course of the other was full of expectation. Whatever the difference in their condition, each saw through a glass darkly. When the Rebellion came the soldier who had everything to hope for deserted his country's cause, and, to his shame, enlisted in the ranks of the enemy. The retired officer, without prospects, asked but for an humble position in his country's service. In 1863, as generals commanding upon opposite sides, they met at Vicksburg, the one a conquering hero, loved and honored by his country, and destined to have his name enrolled at the topmost line upon the scroll of fame; the other, a defeated commander, offering his sword in surrender to his unassuming comrade of the Mexican war—General Grant, the hero; General Pemberton, the rebel. Probably the life of General Grant will afford the best illustration of the text that I can give. All the way through life he saw through a glass darkly. He was clear-headed, far-seeing, and quick-witted as a military commander. Unequaled in his judgment in the field, and unsurpassed in the coolness of his courage, he was not the child of destiny, like Napoleon, but was the child of an unerring Provi-

dence who opened the way before him. In his individual life there was but little forecast of what would follow next. The humble cabin in which he was born indicated a quiet agricultural life. His limited opportunities for early education were not favorable to a literary career. His distaste, even at West Point, for a military life, did not point to the future soldier. The breaking out of the Mexican war probably formed the turning point of his life. His withdrawal from the service and his return to farming seemed to change the current until the breaking out of the Rebellion induced his return to the military life. Promotion quickly followed until he became commander-in-chief, and upon the return of peace he became the President of the Republic that his genius and courage had saved. Events had shaped his course and Providence had taken care of results. No man ever looked forward with more obscured vision; none ever looked backward with clearer perception and greater gratitude than he upon actions and achievements whose results and accomplishments had not always been clear before him. History is but the record of events which developed and matured, as the seed dropped into congenial soil, under favorable conditions, germinates, grows, and produces fruit. The actors in all these events saw but dimly into the future.

Civilizations, ancient and modern, as they looked forward, have always stretched their course along lines temporarily practical and seemingly permanent; but as we, of to-day, trace these lines backward, we read, as we run, the handwriting which tells only of an ephemeral race building upon insecure foundations while idly dreaming that their work would never perish.

Along the old lines of overland commerce, wealth concentrated at advantageous centers and there built great and magnificent cities. Even while the shapely marble column, in its newness, glistened in the rising sun, and foundations solid as the rock were being laid for new temples, the fearless navigator was opening new and shorter highways across the sea. The land was deserted for the new paths and the great cities were deserted and began to fall into ruins. Mighty principalities had sprung up, and, through increasing power, had become the rulers and arbiters of the world. Environments changed while power and pride succumbed to newly-developed forces, while nations, once powerful and great, became but dependencies to their stronger neighbors. We contemplate the downfall with sad wonder but see only in retrospect the weaknesses which brought ruin but which foresight never could have

discovered. These lessons always impress but rarely instruct us. Our own American civilization is an example in point. Our progress is greater than our knowledge of our needs. We are pressing blindly into the future without guarding the dangerous places we have discovered in our march. We are leaving enemies at important points, where mischief is brewing, waiting its opportunities for harm. Our national history is too glorious and bright to have it marred by the agitation of disloyal men and women; it is too sacred to have it overshadowed by a traitor's flag, where no stars glitter, and where its bars speak only of shame. If we can not see what is before us, let us guard our institutions with all the jealous care of men who will maintain their integrity, or die for their honor. Four hundred years ago Columbus sailed bravely into the West to find the shores of India. He was not looking for a new world, or a new continent. He found land, but died without a knowledge of the magnitude of the work he had accomplished. England colonized the newly discovered land for the enlargement of her borders, without knowing that out of this colonization and out of her laws and previous history was to grow up in the future an independent power, destined to demonstrate to the world the ability of the

masses for self-government. American independence was not the outgrowth of well-matured plans, but was the result, without the intention, of resistance to unjust and oppressive exactions. Our Constitutional form of government was not the original plan proposed by the Colonies. Not until the Confederation had failed did we become a nation in any proper form of construction. Our fathers saw through a glass darkly, while an overruling providence guided them and their children through the dangers of darkness which they did not comprehend. Look back again for half a century and mark how confident we then were in our stability and strength. Slavery existed as a blot upon our national character. Resting upon the Missouri Compromise the North believed that slavery would be confined forever to the South, and that, some time in the future, a peaceful solution of the problem of the abolition would be reached. We but looked into the future through a delusive medium, and deceived ourselves into the belief that we were in no danger, while beneath our feet the smothered fires of a volcano were ready to burst.

At the adoption of the Missouri Compromise a member from South Carolina had said that "a fire had been kindled which all the waves of the ocean

can not put out, and which only seas of blood can put out," a prophecy recalled only when the admission of Texas and the war with Mexico brought to our ears the rumbling of the sleeping volcano. The Compromise Measure of 1850 again drew the veil over our eyes, and we treated our fears as phantoms of the imagination. The creation of the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska in 1854, with the nullification of the Missouri Compromise, again excited the country, and raised the danger signal. And when Robert Toombs, of Georgia, declared that "he would yet call the roll of his slaves on Bunker Hill," the eyes of the advocates of freedom were opened to the gravity of the situation, and the country was truly alarmed.

The threatening events of the past scarcely seemed to remove the mists through which we viewed the future. Not until the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency and the admission of Kansas to the Union of States, did the danger culminate. Then, looking backward, we saw the uncertainty of the way through which we had come. As representatives of the Grand Army, we can now look back and see that through the whole conflict of the Rebellion, from the first call for volunteers down to the close of the war, and from that to the

present, we only saw through an obscured medium. Time, the interpreter of the past, has alone translated to us the meaning of many things which then seemed clear to us, but which, after all, we imperfectly understood.

You remember well the history as it now passes in review before us. You saw the war cloud as it rolled threateningly up from the South. You heard the trumpet call to arms and bravely responded to the call. Draw, if you will, the contrast between the excitement and turmoil of then and the peace and rest of to-day. For four long years there were earnest gatherings and sad departings and hurryings to and fro. All through the North, from East to West, the air was thrilled with the stirring strains of martial music. Our streets were thronged with the marching of armed battalions. The earth shook with the thundering of artillery and the roar of battle. The nights gathered around us in darkness and gloom as the stern exigencies of battles fought had desolated firesides and homes. The mornings brought only sad rejoicings as victory proclaimed the triumph of our arms.

Down the Mississippi to New Orleans, across the States from the Mississippi to Atlanta, and from Atlanta to the sea, from Atlanta north and from

Washington south, surged the tide of battle until the arms of the Rebellion were grounded at Appomattox, and the war was over. We saw those four years of war only through shadows and clouds. The South had taken up arms to preserve an institution which its very act was to destroy. The North entered upon the defense not to destroy slavery but to preserve the Union and to maintain the integrity of the old flag, with the number of its stars undiminished and its stripes unstained with disloyalty. God was with us, and

> "Stood within the shadow,
> Keeping watch above His own."

In God's keeping the right always triumphs.

In 1863 Mr. Lincoln issued the glorious Proclamation of Emancipation. It seems that Providence had waited for this most important and decisive action upon the part of the Executive. It was life to the Union and death to the Rebellion. With it the Southern dream of a proud empire, reared upon the unrequited toil of an enslaved race, vanished forever. The stars upon our flag grew brighter as freedom's standard-bearer raised it high above the smoke of battle, and carried it into the hottest of the fight, and to victory. The war is long since over

and years of prosperity and peace have passed between the surrender and to-day. We read backward through the pages of history and learn the providences which its passing events could not have revealed to us.

> "We see dimly in the present,
> What is small and what is great,
> Slow of faith, how weak an arm
> May turn the iron helm of fate."

We see face to face to-night as we recount the struggle, the cessation of strife, and the years of peace which have followed. We rejoice again, as we think of the greetings of loved ones from whom the war had separated us, and to whom a merciful Providence restored us. We rejoice in the organization of the Grand Army of the Republic, whose comradeships keep the traditions of the conflict fresh in memory, and whose Post-rooms are the pleasant refuges of loyal companionship. Memorial-day recalls to us the days when those who now lie sleeping in their graves marched shoulder to shoulder into the battle. We gather at their graves, and rehearse their heroic deeds, as we drop tears and strew sweet flowers above them in remembrance of what they did and how they died for their country. We bow in grateful remembrance of those who fell and

in profound thankfulness for the lives that are spared.

Dr. Hillis has said beautifully:

"To sound of fife and drum they marched away, these loved and loving fathers, brothers, lovers, friends, soon to return again, they said, when we have freed God's children and made our country one again. But their good Father, God, planned better for them than they knew. Theirs the martyr's death, theirs the patriot's crown, striking chains from fettered slaves. God freed them from the fleshly bond. Seeking to keep their country one, God brought them to His eternal city, for they had fought a good fight, and though lost to sight, they still to men are dear. To-day the magic wand of memory hath brought their names and faces back to us, but their graves we never shall strew with sweet and silent tokens of our grief. 'No man knoweth their sepulcher.' Under scorching summer skies, overcome with heat, some fell naked and starving; some died in prisons damp and deadly; under smoking sulphurous clouds, that seemed to rain on their devoted heads, the hissing shot and shell; most fell on bloody battlefields, now hallowed by their graves. And so we know where some do lie, and yearly decorate their graves; and some their final resting-place we know not of. But who shall say that He who

clothes His lilies doth not mark His soldiers' graves? In God's deep glens and forest sides they lie. Their graves are strewn with grasses green, each one with flowers gay. Each purpling summer day God's clinging vines fall over them, and when the autumn's frost hath splashed the leaves with blood and gold, the forest trees then drop their wreaths of softest leaves upon their billowy graves, while to the music of God's winds the weeping vines, the sobbing vines, the mournful elms, sound out their solemn funeral requiem. There let God's heroes lie till the last trump shall sound."

The past has gone forever and will not return. Its lessons remain for our profit as history tells the story. The present is with us for our improvement by applying the lessons that the past has imparted to us. The future is before us waiting our legacy of blessings, though we see into its coming days "through a glass darkly." What shall be the harvest? For a hundred and twenty-eight years we have progressed with rapid steps in the formation and development of a nationality based upon the ability of the masses for self-government. We have encountered obstacles and overcome them. We have seen dangers ahead and escaped them. We have been assailed at vital points, but have successfully resisted encroachment and triumphed. We now

look into the future hopefully, but not without misgivings. The question that confronts us is, "Shall our Republican institutions continue long, or shall they fail?" There are dangers all around us—dangers from without and within. Can we in the future withstand and overcome these dangers as we have overcome them in the past?

Governments have lived for a thousand years, and have then gone down in the storms of human passion. Others have met with a similar fate in a much shorter period. Our form of government is but an experiment. Local interests and sectional jealousies are striving for the mastery, seeking to control the legislation of the country in their interests. Wealth is using its vast influence and power for oppression, corruption, and greed. Party spirit resorts to dishonesty and the contravention of the ballot. Centralization aims by its power to hold the weaker element in abject subjection. Our legislatures and our courts of justice, our law-makers and our judges, bow at the shrine of local politics, and worship the leaders who hold in their hands the key to office. These are manifestations of weakness which, if not counteracted by the patriotism of the land, will eventually end in disaster to our institutions.

The Grand Army has taught a broader lesson of

fealty. The very spirit of our loyal dead rises up in judgment against whatever would break down our Constitution, dissever our Union, or destroy our nationality. If it was a country worth living for when the Constitution was undergoing its severest trial; if it was worth dying for when armed rebellion threatened a severance of its union, it is worth saving now that it is great, respected, and prosperous. In the midst of our sorrow for our dead, and in their glorious memories, we look for the integrity of all that they fought for. We look from the mounds underneath which they sleep, up to the flag for which they died, and from that beloved standard we look to the God of battles, praying that into His keeping shall be committed the interests of the nation and the welfare of humanity which our institutions represent.

As we have been true to our flag, and loyal to our country, let us be loyal and true to the Almighty Leader of the hosts of righteousness, so that when we stand face to face with His judgments, we shall know even as we are known. He still calls us to battle for the right, and

"He has sounded forth His trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His mercy-seat;
O, be swift, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant, my feet;
Our God is marching on."

V.

THE INVISIBLE ARMY.

"And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."—2 KINGS VI. 17.

THE Psalmist has beautifully said, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The text refers to one of these wonderful instances of providential care so often repeated in the history of the Israelitish people, and so often experienced by individuals and nations since the days of the prophets. Israel was surrounded by merciless foes determined upon her destruction. Now, the Syrians were encamped against them and formed their ambuscades at various places, expecting to entrap and cut them off. Elisha, the prophet, divinely inspired, discovered their hiding places and kept his master informed of their movements.

So often had the schemes of the enemy been defeated that the king of Syria, exasperated and puzzled, imagined that a traitor in his own camp had disclosed his secrets. But one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king, but Elisha that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber." The prophet was at Dothan, which the Syrians, in haste, besieged by night, so as to cut off his retreat. But a greater than Elisha was there: the Lord Jehovah had sent the invisible armies of the skies to occupy the mountain and protect His servant from all harm. When the morning dawned and the servant of Elisha saw the armed hosts of the Syrians, he said to his master, in great alarm, "Alas! how shall we do?" Calm and undisturbed at the formidable array, Elisha prayed that the young man's eyes should be opened, when, behold, the mountain gleamed with the splendor of armed hosts of horsemen and chariots of fire. Then was revealed to the young man the great truth which all the world should know—that all the armies of earth are powerless before the armies of heaven.

The prophet prayed once more and blindness came upon the Syrian hosts, so that the man they came to destroy led them to a distant city and into

the presence of the king and the armies of the enemies upon whom they came to make war. Truly, they who have their trust in God "abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and He becomes to them a refuge and a fortress.

The Christian believes in God's protecting presence and through that faith his life becomes a life of obedience and trust. As the daylight fades and the shadows of night gather round him, the child of God commends himself to his Father's care, and within the hollow of the Almighty hand slumbers sweetly, peacefully, and safely. As the darkness flees before the rosy light of breaking day, he offers up his prayer of thanksgiving and sings his song of rejoicing. With renewed faith and purpose he submits his strength and will to Divine guidance, and leaning upon the strong arm of the Lord of Hosts, fearlessly marches into the battle of life.

The text contains an encouraging lesson of God's providence and care for His people. No truth is more forcibly taught upon the page of history than that of a nation's exaltation through righteousness and its reproach because of sin. Sacred and profane history alike are but the startling records of the rise and fall of nations—records that are emphasized by the splendid ruins which strew the earth

and which tell alike of great exaltation and still greater humiliation, which tell of life and growth under the sunshine of truth, or death and decay under the blasting influences of transgression. The Tigris and Euphrates, the Nile, the Mediterranean, and the islands of the sea, the mountains and valleys and the plains of earth,—all bear witness that sin has been a vortex, into which the highest civilizations have been thrown and have forever been swallowed up. God goes before the people and the nation which march along the highways of righteousness guiding them by His pillar of fire at night and His cloud of protection by day, so long as they acknowledge the directing Hand and trust the Divinity that shines from the fire and conceals itself in the clouds. By direction of the Almighty, the children of Israel escaped from Egyptian bondage. They crossed the Red Sea between the miraculously sustained walls of water. They saw their pursuing enemies enter the narrow path from which their own hosts had just safely emerged, and they saw the water close over chariot and riders forever, but the power that moved the protecting and avenging hand was to them unseen. God was with His people and in His own mysterious way directed the hidden power which was to accomplish His purposes. The Lord

had indeed triumphed, for His people had not been required to strike a single blow in their own defense. The hand that had placed the pillar of cloud between pursuer and pursued, and that had closed the waters over Egypt's mightiest chieftains was unseen by both foeman and friend. When, in the reign of the good Hezekiah, the Assyrians came against Israel, the destroying angel passed over their camp at night and smote a hundred fourscore and five thousand of their bravest warriors.

There are no foes harder to battle with than those we can not see. There are no forces more difficult to contend against than those which can not be brought within the limits of our sight. We can not estimate the numbers of such a foe. We can not detect his movements nor understand his tactics. We can not anticipate his point of attack nor calculate how we may avert or counteract his blow. Against such a presence we are helpless and defenseless. The storm rages above us, the thunder terrifies us, while the play of the forked lightning seems searching us in every hiding-place. The muffled rumble of the earthquake and the trembling soil beneath our feet startles us out of all propriety and reason, while we add to our fears and to the real danger a thousand misgivings that are purely imag-

inary. The pestilence that walks in darkness and invades our land bears consternation upon its wings, and we cry out, "Whither shall we fly from its dreadful presence?" Alarm takes possession of our nature. Our very humanity seems to desert us, and we fly from our neighbors and from friends and from loved ones, hoping in our selfishness to secure some health-protected spot where we may be safe. Ah! how in the recognized presence of the invisible we forget that He who keepeth Israel never slumbers or sleeps, and that we can not fly from His presence even if we seek the uttermost parts of the earth. He means that we shall trust Him in the darkness as well as in the light. He has said, "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." The Christian's faith is that which trusts the unseen power which lies behind all open manifestation. No matter what threatens he knows that God will send His protecting angels to keep charge over him. What is history but the recorded results of these invisible forces? The books that fill our libraries contain only some small fragments of the world's unnumbered wrecks, which have been saved from the vortex of that oblivion which has swallowed up all the rest. The chronologist computes his time by fragments—periods, as we call them, intervening between great

historical events—measurements of time made up of the rise and fall of empires and republics, interspersed with the life and death of kings and warriors, and stained by blood and crime. The ruins of past greatness, which tell the sad story of glory and shame, for centuries have cast their gloom upon many of the loveliest spots of earth. We may ask what and where were the forces that caused all this desolation? Why did not one historical period, or even one generation, profit by the misfortunes of its predecessor? History points to the physical forces —the ambitions and passions of men—but is almost silent as to the unseen influences which excited the ambition and stirred the passions which struck the blow. Man was in the destroying wind, the earthquake, and the fire, but God was in the still small voice which pronounced the doom of disobedience and sin. History heard the din of battle but failed to recognize the mysterious power which directed the issue.

Nations come and go, they rise and fall. Like human life they seem born only to a short existence, to run their course and die. It is a serious question for the statesman of the present to consider how long our government shall stand, what shall contribute to its permanence, or what causes shall lead to its overthrow.

How few years, as we compute them, has even the oldest nation of the day existed under its present form of government. Progress in its triumphant march over the earth, is ever dissipating political fallacies, destroying effete forms, and establishing new principles. Man is being slowly lifted to a high plane. The divinity is stirring within him, opening his eyes and removing the blindness which hid from him the invisible forces which, under God, are at his command. With us, and with what we do for the future, rest largely the responsibilities of a free government, trusting its life and its all to the masses of the people, who, irrespective of condition or race, direct its destinies by a free and unrestricted ballot.

From innumerable circumstances in our history we believe that we are highly favored of heaven. If Israel was chosen as the pioneer of a higher civilization, of a purer morality, and as the law-giver of the world; if Greece was chosen as the exemplar of æsthetic culture and as a teacher of the arts; if England became the stronghold of aggressive Christianity; so the United States is destined to embrace all these and to become an example of still further advancement. Surely God is with us, and "they that be with us are more than they that be with them." From the time that civilization first planted its

standard at Jamestown down to the present hour, the mountains round about us have been filled with the invincible hosts of Jehovah. The spirit that calmed the waves and stilled the tempestuous winds on Galilee has hovered over our waters; our land has been hallowed by the footsteps of Him who went about doing good, and our homes have been sanctified by the sweet spirit of Bethany.

To-day we look backward upon our history with wonder and with gratitude to God. We look forward to a destiny that will bring the kingdoms of this earth and the kingdom of heaven into closer communion. Our tongues break into song and our souls into thanksgiving as we contemplate the mercies which have been our lot. When dangers threatened relief was always near. When discouragement came to our people, the heavens opened in brightness above us and the bow of promise spanned the continent. When uncertainty clouded our governmental course, the superior intelligence of our statesmen always provided a safe solution of the problem. The course of empire upon this Western continent has never been checked. The savage Red Man, with his merciless tomahawk and scalping knife, scarcely interfered with the westward flowing of the tide. His woodcraft and savage instincts

were no match for the intelligence and persistent courage of the white settlers. The fierce contests over boundary lines raised up a hardy and valiant race destined for yeoman service in the future. The political disputes with the old country, which claimed our allegiance, sharpened the wits of the people, gave wisdom to our magistrates, influence to our legislators, and developed those peculiar ideas of government which have made us the most advanced of nations.

The War of the Revolution determined and settled our political status among the peoples of the earth. The confederacy which followed the Declaration of Independence demonstrated the weakness of the foundation upon which we expected to build. The Constitution of 1789 welded the States together into an unbroken and enduring chain of common interest. The War of 1812 strengthened our national bond, unified the people, and proved to the world our ability to maintain our rights. The War of the Rebellion abolished slavery, made our soil free, and forever destroyed the idea of secession as a constitutional right. The return of peace and the organization of the Grand Army of the Republic crystallized American loyalty into a gem of clearest ray and unclouded beauty. Step by step we have ascended the

heights which no other nation has reached. A mighty republic has grown upon the foundation of unrestricted and universal suffrage, refuting the fallacy that men trusted with a free ballot could never govern wisely and well. The experience of one hundred and twenty-nine years has shown that, with as many conflicting interests as there are States, all may be harmonized by wise legislation and a just administration of the law. If a partisan congress or unjust judges should decide otherwise, the people will rectify the impropriety peacefully at the ballot-box. The invisible power of wholesome public opinion will always prove a conservative force among a God-fearing people. As the blood of relationship holds together the various branches of the family, so the relationship of the States creates a common interest in the welfare of all. Yea, more than this—the mingled blood of American patriotism, partaken in solemn communion by the soil of every commonwealth in defense of the whole, would cry out from the ground to heaven against any attempt at the life of our system of government. Surely, the graves of our fallen comrades would form a rampart behind which their invisible spirits would forever keep guard over an unsevered Union.

To-day, in this memorial service, we remember

our beloved dead for their part in the solution of the great problems of humanity. Not only did they freely offer themselves upon their country's altar, a sacrifice for the great interests of the present, but by their blood they became the oracle and prophet of the future. They denounced and defeated the severance of national bonds, pronounced the doom of rebellion, freed the bondsman from his chains, and predicted the coming of a national greatness which, if not already here, is rapidly upon the way. Every day should be the benediction of the morrow. Every generation should store up blessings for the next. We bless the past for its lessons of experience, and we revere the memories of the men who made the past a glorious prediction for the future. So we come on this Memorial-day to record our indebtedness to the patriot soldiers, pay our homage for their bravery, express our sympathy with their sufferings, and our admiration for their achievements, pledging ourselves to stand loyally by the institutions for which they nobly died.

As we gather on this day—to us a day of sad and pleasant memories, a day of instructive retrospect and of profitable anticipation for a glorious future—we meet with our dead here in this quiet God's acre, there in National Cemeteries, or perhaps far

away in lonely and forgotten spots, where friendly hands have never strewn flowers. From all these hallowed places, yea, even from the depths of the sea, our dead comrades keep watch over the nation's honor. We are here to-day, a grateful multitude, to pay such tribute as we can to the heroes who did so much for us. We strew flowers of beauty upon their grassy mounds, and speak words of love and kindly remembrance; we shed tears of sorrow for the departed and express words of sympathy for the bereaved as though but yesterday they had passed out of our sight. We seem to-day to live over again the eventful past. We hear again the bugle call echoing over the hills; we see the sad partings and the long farewells; victory and defeat, bereavement and death, all pass before us in review. Our spirits hold communion with the comrades of long ago. We know that in the body they will not again answer roll call this side of the pearly gates, but their influence will live until the reveille of the resurrection morning shall bid them rise for the great review.

"Here rest the great and good. Here they repose
After their generous toil. A sacred band,
They take their sleep together, while the year
Comes with its earliest flowers to deck their graves,
And gathers them again as winter frowns.

Theirs is no vulgar sepulcher,—green sods
Are all their monument, and yet it tells
A nobler history than pillared piles
Or the eternal pyramids.

They need
No statue nor inscription to reveal
Their greatness. It is round them, and the joy
With which their children tread the hallowed ground
That holds their venerated bones, the peace
That smiles on all they fought for, and the wealth
That clothes the land they rescued,—these, though mute,
As feeling ever is when deepest,—these
Are monuments more lasting than the fanes
Reared to the kings and demigods of old.

Let these elms
Bend their protecting shadow o'er their graves,
And build with their green roof the only fane,
Where we may gather on this hallowed day
That rose to them in blood, and set in glory.
Here let us meet, while our motionless lips
Give not a sound, and all around is mute
In the deep Sabbath of a heart too full
For words or tears,—here let us strew the sod
With the fresh flowers of spring, and make to them
An offering of the plenty Nature gives,
And they have rendered ours,—perpetually."

We have many more graves to decorate to-day than one year ago. In our own State over a thousand of our comrades have been gathered by the grim reaper—Death. There will be more next year, and still more in the years that shall follow. As these mounds multiply, the earthly roll call shortens,

and yet as the years roll by those who survive will still come to decorate the graves, and when the last comrade shall have received his honorable discharge the lessons of Memorial-day will still be remembered —they will never die.

It has been said that the peculiar genius of this memorial season is that, while other holidays praise institutions, this glorifies men, honors the private citizen and the seemingly obscure soldier. Walter Scott described Old Mortality as going through the cemeteries of Scotland, chiseling anew upon the tombstones the names that time had well-nigh obliterated. Asked to explain his zeal for the memory of these worthies, the old man replied that he wished to see the heroes of yesterday march forward side by side with the youth of to-day. That nation suffers a great calamity whose children and youth have separated themselves from yesterday's battlefields and victories, and have forgotten to honor the memories of their fathers, the sages and the statesmen from whom they have received a priceless heritage.

I thank God that loyalty to flag and country is still the countersign. It is related that an old emperor was dying. He had been a father to his people and had loved and cared for them as his children. The burden upon his heart was the destiny of his

country, and what, when he was gone, should become of all that he had established for the good of his people. To give him assurance that all would be cared for when he was no more, there passed in review before him the brave officers who had led his armies, and the veterans who had been the heroes of many a hard-fought battle. Upon their banners was inscribed, "We are loyal to our emperor and will be loyal to his country." "Yes," said the emperor, "they have been loyal and true to me, and I could trust my government to their care, but they are growing old and like me will soon be gone, and then who shall care for my country?" Further to assure him of his country's safety there came before his review an army of stalwart young men, the pride and flower of the land. They were the noble sons of the veterans who had just passed, and carried on their banners the legend, "We follow in our fathers' steps, and will be loyal to king and country." "Yes," said the emperor, "I could die in peace and trust the country to the worthy sons of such noble sires, but alas! they, too, will soon be gone, and after them what will become of the land?" Following after the young men and stepping quickly to the tap of the drum, came the vast army of the boys of the empire, bearing upon their banners, "Our fathers

have taught us patriotism and we will be loyal to our country and live and die for its best interests." "There," said the emperor, "I am content and die happy; a country built up by such loyal veterans, supported by such noble sons, and who are to be followed by such patriotic children, can never be overturned by revolution and will never die." This lesson is for us to-day. History records your loyal and heroic service, and many of your sons, imbued with your spirit, have within the past year gone forth with the same ardent patriotism, to die, if need be, for their country's honor, and their children have been marching to the music of the Union and have been taught to love and revere the old flag for which their grandfathers fought.

In the springtime, when the flowers come to their resurrection after their long slumber; when the birds, after their winter's silence, wake to their melody of song; when the world is bright with renewed life, we remember our dead, and they come forth to meet us, not only in precious memory as we knew them long ago, but they come in the developed and perfected work for which their death laid the foundation and of which their blood wrote the prediction. They come in the realization of the great truths for which their lives were given. They

come in the broader and nobler patriotism which has resulted from their deeds. They come in the felt presence of their spirits in the very atmosphere which surrounds us.

This is a government founded upon intelligence, and can only be perpetuated by virtue. We trust the franchise to the evil and the good alike. We can draw no distinction between vice and virtue at the ballot-box. The responsibility of the choice of proper administrators is thrown upon the body politic; it becomes an education in fidelity and time has proved that, in the main, the trust has not been misplaced. It is true that mistakes are made and frauds are perpetrated, but they form the exception to the rule. Mercenary men sometimes obtain positions of great trust, incompetent men are appointed to offices which require skill that they can not give, and unworthy men are often elevated to posts of honor which they do not adorn, but these are not proofs of the inadequacy of the system. They but show that the work of evangelization is not universal, and that political education among the masses is incomplete. To the man of integrity, however ignorant, the burden is an incentive to higher duties and nobler aims. The defects are not of the system but of our want of a proper appreciation of

its privileges. They show that we, who ought to be foremost in citizenship, have not done our whole duty. To the Christian people of this country the broad and humanizing advantages of republicanism ought to be incentives to more virtuous activity and stimulants to higher patriotic requirements in our politics. They should be to the goodness and intelligence of the country an earnest pledge for the redemption of the ballot from unholy contamination. Let absolute truth—and that embraces all that is righteous in governments and in men—be the grand ideal that this nation shall hold up before the world. Call it an idea, if you will, and then, with the characteristic earnestness of men who are convinced of its value, let us press it home to hearts and lives of the American people. Ideas are the forces that move the world. They are invisible armies that discomfit the material hosts of folly, vice, and ignorance. They are the horsemen and the chariots of fire which gather round the prophets and conservators of civil purity, and which send dismay into the ranks of the political tricksters and jugglers and gradually cause the unworthy and incompetent to hide themselves away from public sight. They have caused revolutions and formed new governments. They have swayed the millions, and have made social

life to leap forward with a single bound into higher and healthier conditions. This republic was the offspring of an idea,—the conviction that the people who were to be governed could best govern themselves independent of hereditary rulership or autocratic dictatorship: the idea that the combined judgment of the masses—the voice of the people—expressed to the largest extent the will of God concerning us. That is our political faith to-day, but we also believe that we can not reach or maintain a standard worthy of a free people unless we elevate our ideas of public morality for the masses and of private virtues for our representatives. The State wants:

> "Men,—high-minded men,
> With powers as far above dull brutes endued
> As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude;
> Men who their duties know,
> And knowing, dare maintain."

Whatever the world may say and however infidelity or skepticism may determine, the civil world is indebted to Christianity for its wonderful progress.

Christ, the Exemplar, whilst the originator of new ideas for human conduct, was also the collator of many of the old and useful, which had been abused and misapplied. For the doctrine of revenge and retaliation He gave us that of forgiveness of

injuries. For the cure of dissensions and unhappy differences He gave us due consideration for the opinions of others. For social wrongs He gave us purity of life. For the peace of the state He gave us respect for magistrates and rulers and obedience to the laws. For civil progress He gave us trust in God and brotherly kindness in our daily intercourse with men. He restrained our evil tendencies by a reiteration of the Ten Commandments. He softened our natures by the Beatitudes, and enlarged our lives and increased our hopes by the new commandments that He gave us. He taught us the wondrous idea of love with the Divine assurance that it was the all-powerful principle for good—"the fulfilling of the law." How the cross, as the emblem of that Christianity, has been revered and loved throughout the civilized world! The Christian world of the nineteenth century is a far better world than that of the Jew or Roman two thousand years ago. Humanity stands upon a higher platform, human rights are conceded by the rulers, respected by the people, and enforced and protected by the laws as never before in the history of human government. Liberty, not only in thought and action, but in self-government, has given men higher conceptions of individual duty and has drawn their hearts nearer to each

other. The cross has carried with it the idea of redemption and has given inspiration to the hope of heaven after the troubles and cares of this life have passed away. This invisible force, like the march of a victorious army, has passed from conquering to conqueror, and still like an avalanche continues to gather strength as it moves forward. It has marched over the boundary line into the new century and with increasing ranks will carry the whole world toward the millennial year, when God's kingdom shall come and His will shall be done upon the earth. It is an idea that has fought its way against darkness and prejudice, against foes both visible and invisible; but it has made its citadel in the hearts and homes and lives of the people, and it is still triumphant.

Another of the forces which fill the atmosphere and the mountains about us is the idea of our nationality. One country, one people, one flag, is our motto. Possibly the thought of secession or disunion has passed forever. We can not part company without losing strength and influence. We can never sever our Union without becoming a reproach to the world. We can not multiply flags without national shame and humiliation. That grand old banner, since the day when its first star was attached and all its stripes were bound together, has com-

manded respect and admiration upon all the waters of the globe. Resplendent and beautiful as the tints of the dawning morning, it has reflected the rays of the rising sun of freedom through all the sky, from the heavens above to the earth beneath. For more than a century it has attracted the weary toilers of the earth. The very thought of it, its name, its magnificent presence, have carried to the minds of millions the idea of liberty—liberty of conscience, liberty of citizenship, liberty of noble manhood—the right to the labor of one's own hand, to the product of one's own accumulation, the right of the man to own himself, the right of education for his children, the privileges of equality with other men, and the right of protection against oppression.

In the midst of some great public excitement or fancied peril, we ask, "Is the country really in danger?" Are these popular strikes a menace to our institutions? Do these vast local interests which, in their selfishness, rise up in threatening attitudes, mean mischief to the whole fabric? Will a mercenary congress ever barter our rights away for ambition or lucre? Will the American people ever yield willingly to their own humiliation? We look about us and ask, as did the servant of the prophet, "Alas! how shall we do?" But when our eyes shall

be opened and we shall behold the horsemen and the chariots of fire—the great innumerable hosts of the skies, hidden from our natural eyes, we will be led to answer, "God is with us, and they that are with us are greater than they that be with them." We will not fear when we see these unnumbered detachments armed with the potent influences of the great ideas of which I have spoken. When we behold among the standards of that vast gathering the banner of the cross inscribed with Christ's new commandment and the spirits of our dead pointing to that as the life of our American institutions; when we see our own national flag bearing aloft the motto, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof;" when we see here the banner of a free ballot, and there the banner of constitutional security, and in the front of that great array a fortress of the graves of those who fought and died for the liberties we enjoy, we need not fear for the future, for God is with us.

Against all these threatening dangers there are safeguards, and we must see to it that they are found and applied. We should multiply our public schools a hundred-fold. We should have our system of education as free, as practical, and as complete as the experience of the age can make. We should have

our Churches increased a thousand times, have them conducted by a loyal and godly ministry, and have them supported by an honest and patriotic membership. We should bring to the work of evangelization an aggressive piety that will pursue sin and vice of every description into every stronghold and give them uncompromising battle at every step. We want the spirit that drove the money-changers from the temple, that rebuked sin in high places, and that administered punishment to the wrongdoer without favor; the spirit that, upon the other hand, forgave the repentant sinner and in love invited the weary ones of earth to come to Him and find rest.

And so on this Memorial-day we must not forget the sources from which have come these national blessings. We go back in our history and thank God for the Puritan spirit and for that deliverance from religious oppression which brought to our shores the *Mayflower* and its heroic company who sought upon our soil freedom to worship God. We are thankful, too, for the prayer and song which hallowed Plymouth, a prayer whose strains still linger upon the New England air, and will forever be wafted upon the winds back and forth to the utmost boundaries of our Union.

We are thankful that the spirit which came in the *Mayflower* still lives. How quickly its influence established peace after the war, in which so many of our comrades fell, was over. How it bridged the frightful chasm with the olive branch and took back to its forgiving bosom the erring ones, and restored peaceful relations with the discordant States.

Under the same influence the victorious armies of the North settled down to peaceful avocations and the hostile camp was transformed into the fraternal spirit of the Grand Army of the Republic. As again we thank God for His blessings to our country, we drop a tear of kindly remembrance over the graves of our dead, believing that, in the great multitude of the invisible, their spirits will be with us to warn and guard us from all dangers which may threaten us.

Comrades beloved, may the God of peace that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

VI.

THE STONE OF HELP.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—1 SAM. VII, 12.

SAMUEL was one of the most remarkable men of any age of the world. From his birth, through long years until his death, his life is a study for the philosopher and statesman, and an example to all men who would fulfill a useful mission in the world. Dedicated before his birth to the office of a Nazarite, he was, at a tender age, consecrated in the tabernacle to the order of the Jewish priesthood. He was the last of the judges of Israel and the first in the line of succession of the prophets. In his childhood, while sleeping in the tabernacle, God revealed to him in a vision the calamity which would befall the house of Eli. He saw the sad realization of that vision, and witnessed the miseries of Israel during the following years of their forgetfulness of God and their disobedience to His laws. He warned his people against their idolatry, secured their promise of repentance, and gathered them together at Mizpeh for a recon-

secration, where, by libations, fastings, and prayer, they renewed their covenants to God. At this well-remembered spot, just twenty years before, the Philistines had attacked and overcome them with great slaughter, leaving thirty thousand of their footmen dead upon the field. This same enemy had heard of their second assemblage at Mizpeh, and had again come up against them to do battle.

Israel was unprepared for fight. Their mission was one of humiliation and repentance, and not of war. Unarmed, and in the presence of hostile forces, they realized, in their extremity, that nothing but divine intervention could help them. They called upon Samuel, who prayed earnestly and made sacrifice unto God in their behalf, and God heard and answered his prayer by a great thunder, which discomfited the enemy and gave victory to Israel. Samuel commemorated this event by setting up a stone, and calling it Ebenezer, saying, in the words of the text,

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

These words start the thought that God dealt with Israel as He dealt and is still dealing with us. Events, easily traced through their career, may, as we shall presently see, as easily find their counter-

part in our own history. We can but make them a subject of serious inquiry, in order that their experience may serve us in similar straits against the calamities they suffered, and preserve us against the temptations to which they so easily yielded. Samuel saw the close of the theocracy, a government in which, since the days of Moses, God had been recognized as the Supreme Ruler. Against his better judgment, he bowed to the will of the people, and anointed Saul as the first king over Israel. He lived to witness Saul's downfall, and anointed David his successor.

There was both far-reaching faith and retrospect in Samuel's reply or declaration. The Lord had wonderfully helped Israel through years of obedience, and had mercifully borne with them in long seasons of disobedience. He had fulfilled His promise to Abraham by bringing his descendants to their home in the land of Canaan. There had been dreadful servitude in Egypt, long wanderings through the wilderness, hard fightings in even the land of promise and of hope. Sufferings and privations had been their lot during many years; all through which the remarkable providence of God had left the history of His people overflowing with recollections of mercies, deliverances, and Divine interpositions,

enough to have secured ages of loving trust and obedience. Forgetfulness and ingratitude, those dominating sins of the human heart, had led Israel far into disregard of the terms upon which they were to possess the land.

They neglected to subdue it. They forgot the command, given upon Mount Sinai, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." They had not kept themselves apart from the enemies of Jehovah, but had associated with them and followed their wicked devices. It required frequent punishment and oft-threatened dangers to recall their allegiance to the old faith. In these great straits, they pleaded for mercy, and it was freely given. They invoked God's blessing, and His banner over them was love. Upon the very eve of destruction they prayed for deliverance, and the finger of the Almighty stirred the elements to the discomfiture of their enemies. So, Samuel set up the "Stone of Help," a crude and simple monument, commemorative of God's helpful presence in the hour of extremity. His forbearance with Israel had been very great. They were His chosen people. Through them all the families of the earth were to be blest. Through Moses, the Law-Giver, was to come the enlightened legislation which was to form the basis of all the humanizing

codes of the future. From the lineage of David was to come the Messiah, and, through that line, was to be established and perpetuated the evangelizing processes through which all nations are yet to be lifted up toward God. They were to cast upon the water of Galilee the seeds of civil and religious liberty, which, after many days, should come back to all shores in the blessings of free and enlightened government. They were to establish for the coming ages a creed of faith and obedience which they themselves should, for a time, forget, but which shall be embraced again, at their great rejoicing, when the song of their harvest home shall be sung upon their restoration to the beloved land from which they have so long been wandering.

Samuel's words were retrospective in expression, but deeply prophetic in their meaning. "Hitherto" was an electric flash of retrospect over nearly nine hundred years of Israelitish history, from Mizpeh back to Ur of the Chaldees. It was also, by implication, a prophecy to all coming time, a warning against national wickedness, a promise of Divine protection to be secured only by obedience to God's commandments.

From the hour that God said to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country," forward to the interces-

sion of Samuel at Mizpeh, Israel had been wonderfully helped and miraculously delivered. Through famine and plenty, through slavery and freedom, through wanderings and restings, through war and peace, through disobedience and faith, they had never been forsaken.

How wonderful the providence! He had not dealt so with any nation. Notwithstanding these mercies and deliverances, how long would His forbearance continue if sin should predominate? This stone of help should be a constant reminder both of deliverance in the past and possible danger in the future. It is a monument set up for us of the present, a perpetual warning against unfaithfulness as emphatic as it was for Israel before it reached the height of national grandeur under Solomon. We are to draw our lesson from this great truth today. To no other nation since Israel have the words of the text applied with greater significance than to us. To no other have the warnings of danger from disobedience to God applied with greater force. Indeed, between the Hebrew history and our own there runs a parallelism which becomes to us a matter of interesting and instructive contemplation. (Between their civil institutions, where enlightened principles of government were intermingled with

divine revelation, and the growth of our policy upon the basis of that revelation, there is a striking *resemblance.*) With faith in the divinity in man, we are stretching out toward the infinite in humanity. Israel went out from a land of physical bondage into a land where God had promised that they should become a free and mighty nation.

They wandered through the wilderness before their destination was reached. Before they could occupy the country which was to be their home, they had to subdue the land. Their progress from Egypt to their abiding-place among the hills of Palestine became marked by historical epochs almost typical of the world's great future. So the pioneers of our civilization came out of a land of spiritual bondage into an uncultivated wilderness where the cornfields were to be carved from the primeval forests, where the pathways were to be hewn through rocky hillsides which had remained in undisturbed repose since the creation, where freedom was to expand her wings and rise to heights hitherto unattained, where national independence and an abiding-place for true liberty were to be conquered from the domain of a savage and merciless foe. The Israelites early provided for the education of their children under learned and experienced teachers. They set

up their tabernacle for religious worship in the wilderness. They drew their laws from divine revelation, and for defense formed a confederacy of eleven tribes and two half-tribes, and codified the foundation principles of their government into a written constitution. So the founders of our republic built schoolhouses for education in the midst of the woodlands and erected churches for worship on the hillsides. They enacted laws for their government based upon the Decalogue, and for mutual protection formed a confederacy of thirteen independent States. By a written constitution (the second only in the history of nations) they bound these States together into an indissoluble union. In our early history, weak in numbers and inexperienced in war, we prevailed over stronger foes, and, trusting in the God of hosts, we became a worshiping and religious people. Surely, God has helped us. Go back in our history and trace the remarkable providences that have proved our help, molded our institutions, and established us as a government of the people.

The Genoese discoverer and the Spanish cavalier brought with them religious faith and the aggressive spirit of missionary zeal, but it was the religion of superstition and bigotry, and the bloody zeal of a spiritual bondage which bowed the neck to the thrall-

dom of an established Church. For four hundred years it has not given to the territory that it conquered a much better civilization than it found. It has not lifted men above the brutality of unsanctified nature, nor drawn them away from the narrowing influences of a false worship. It has not raised them to their higher estate under the liberty of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Spain colonized the West Indies, conquered Mexico, and carried her victories, together with her undesirable religion, into South America. God seemed to hold in abeyance her baneful influence north of the Rio Grande. Who that reads history can doubt God's providence toward us in this? Over this land, upon which religious and civil liberty were to find their highest development, the shield of Divine protection was held. For more than a century the angel of the covenant stood at the southern gate with flaming sword, until the evangel planted the banner of the cross in the midst of the little colony at Jamestown.

The advent was not heralded by sound of trumpet nor established by force. It came not under the parade of bigoted religionists nor was it accomplished by spiritual adventures. It was not attended by zealous missionaries. It was the spontaneous emanation from the silent and unconscious

influence of the representatives of a nation already partly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel of Christ. Between 1607 and 1776 many serious civil and religious differences among the settlers from various nationalities had to be settled by the colonists, in all of which the finger of the Almighty seemed steadily pointing toward freedom of conscience and deeper religious conviction. Here, amid all the terrors and desolations of an unrelenting border warfare, Christianity became the genius of the people and numbered its triumphs in the midst of the most adverse circumstances. In every settlement, however humble, churches and schoolhouses sprung up, spreading refinement, education, and faith in God among the masses, thus preparing the way for the Declaration of Independence.

Through all the adversities of the War of the Revolution, through the privations of the camp and the sufferings of the battlefield, in the contentions of a few feeble Colonies against the oldest, best-organized, and most powerful nation of the earth, the Lord was helping us. There was the steady unfolding of a fixed purpose, then not even comprehended, but now clearly seen, in which, under God, the people were building the foundations of a mighty empire deeper and better than they knew. Who that has

read the story can doubt the providence that directed this nation in that most critical and fearful struggle? The war was over, and victory came with an exhausted exchequer, an unpaid army, an enfeebled semblance of government, a dissatisfied and distrustful people, and a stormy political outlook. The fretful and fitful period between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution was the most trying epoch of American history. The country was upon the verge of dissolution, sailing between monarchy and anarchy. Who that has followed the Federal convention through its dissensions, and can realize the weakness of a government exhausted by war and held together only by a rope of sand, can for a moment doubt that a pilot of more than human attributes stood at the helm and guided the ship through the dangerous channels of that perilous transition. When shattered finances had to be restored by unwonted monetary skill, when international confidence had to be secured by the most heroic methods, when a lost commerce had to be won again, gathered up, indeed, from the débris of a thousand wrecks, even from the grasp of red-handed piracy, the genius of man was inadequate to the task. From many a devout Christian heart, from many a God-fearing household, there went up to

heaven earnest prayers for deliverance. Even those who were unaccustomed to prayer appealed to Almighty power for help in their distress, and God heard and signally answered their petitions. Through the light of present revelation, we look over the storm-tossed waters and realize that none but the Voice that calmed the midnight tempest on the Sea of Galilee could still the howling winds and dashing waters that threatened the life of the young republic.

The Constitution was the rainbow that succeeded the storm. It was God's pledge of promise to the newborn nation, provided it proved faithful to its sacred trusts. It was the harbinger of a glory not yet attained, but to be realized upon conditions of obedience to God and trust in His omnipotence. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," was the acknowledgment of every Christian soul, when the fearful ordeal of reconstruction had been safely passed. The wisdom of our statesmen, through Divine help, had conquered and secured for us a season of rest and recuperation.

A short period for growth and development (a quarter of a century) passed, when war again clouded the sky. The result proved that the Lord was still upon our side, and that Christian equality

and free institutions, as with the Hebrew commonwealth, had found favor in His sight. Still, we had not purged ourselves from blood-guiltiness before the Omnipotent Judge of human actions. We had but weakly struggled against an evil that we were not strong enough to control. It had become a cloud, no longer lingering along the horizon, but was now mounting upward toward the heavens.

Human slavery, that political leprosy which was slowly destroying, to the very bone, the flesh of independence, which had shriveled the strength of manhood, palsied the God-given will of men, and oppressed the soul, still existed under the protection of our laws. The taskmaster cut the cruel lash into the flesh of the bondman, while the owner bartered the life-blood of both men and women in the market for lucre. It was in vain that philanthropic and enlightened men protested against the iniquities of the unnatural institution. It was in vain that the genius of liberty wept over our inconsistencies. It was in vain that the world before which we paraded our civil institutions as an example pointed at us the finger of scorn and poured upon us the epithets of contempt. Slavery existed, flourished, and continued to secure additional favor from our national legislature. It was the one blood-spot upon our es-

cutcheon, which, like the mark upon Cain, told the world of our disgrace, without bringing vengeance upon us for our sins. Those interested in the perpetuation of this great civil wrong became defiant, as human advancement threw the searchlight of progress upon its iniquities, while the indifferent friends of liberty, like the nominal friends of God, remained at ease in Zion.

The ark of God's covenant with the American nation had not yet found its permanent resting-place. The institutions which were to give permanence to our nationality were not settled beyond peradventure. Our national sins had not been entirely forsaken. We still worshiped the strange gods of a foreign land. The time arrived when we must destroy this great idol or be ourselves destroyed by the false worship under which we bowed down before it.

Hitherto the Lord had helped us; but a culminating point had been reached when His help was once more needed, and when His help alone could save us from destruction. Now that help would not come unconditionally, would not come without great sacrifice upon our part, the sacrifice of life, of blood, and suffering. Out of the center of that great iniquity God evolved the storm. Along its fiery path-

way the friends of treason, disunion, and secession hissed their dreadful threatenings. Rebellion, like a cyclone, swept through the South, and on up toward the geographical boundaries that separated slavery from freedom. "But thus far shalt thou come," said the fiat, "and here shall defeat and discomfiture arrest thy onward march."

The great proclamation of January, 1863, at the conclusion of which President Lincoln added, "I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God," established before the nations the justice of our cause and gave earnest of a governmental power which relied upon the assistance of heaven and which would yield to no defeat. It was the great thunder at Mizpah reechoed at Washington, which went reverberating over the hills and along the valleys and down the rivers of our country until the sounds were lost in the dashing waves of the great waters which bound our continent upon every side. God set at naught every infamous scheme for the destruction of our Government and decreed that the links of our chain of union, forged from triple bars of steel, should never be broken.

"He had sounded forth the trumpet that should never call retreat;
He was sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat."

Out of that rebellion came freedom to the slave; out of it came the genius of liberty; out of it came a greater humanity and a more earnest and fervent Christianity. Out of it came a purer patriotism and a more profound reverence for our national institutions. Out of it grew that important and useful brotherhood—THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC!

The close of the Revolutionary War and the close of the War of the Rebellion exhibited marked contrast in the condition of the public mind. The patriotism was as pure and the instinct of fraternity was as great in both cases; but between the two periods there had grown up an abiding faith in the ability of the people to rule, and a profound conviction of the stability of a government founded upon the brotherhood of humanity.

The officers of the Continental Army associated themselves as the "Order of the Cincinnati," to perpetuate their traditions as companions in arms. Like Cincinnatus, they had been called from the plow, had served their country faithfully, and were about to return to their homes. They wanted to preserve old memories by fraternal union, but left out of their consideration the rank and file, who had encountered with them the danger, shared the privations, and won the victories of the war. The country received

the proposition with cold distrust. The people denounced it as a dangerous innovation upon republicanism. The State legislature censured it as unwise and mischievous. Not so at the close of the Rebellion. There was no distrust at the organization of the Grand Army of the Republic. The country was proud of the achievements of its arms, and grateful to the men who had offered their lives in defense of the flag. They hailed the new brotherhood as a guarantee of patriotic devotion to the Constitution, and they have never been deceived. Thirty-nine years of peaceful organization have sufficiently demonstrated their loyalty and usefulness. It was the stone of help set up at Mizpeh, and, as to-day we call it to remembrance, and look back upon its history, we are led to exclaim, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

This brief historical outline, suggested by both the occasion and the text, leads to the belief that in the order of God's providence, this nation has its mission to the world in the lifting up of men to a higher condition than ever heretofore attained. God's prophets have looked forward to a period when this world shall indeed be a foretaste of the world that is to come, when man shall form one universal brotherhood—happy, loving, and holy. The

Church of God, in its drawing together in Christian fellowship, in its broad sympathies and divine and heavenly aspirations, realizes the possibility of such an earthly state. Israel had received the high commission from divine authority to introduce this millennial condition to the world. Jerusalem was a type of heaven, the temple was God's dwelling-place, the Shekinah was the visible manifestation of Deity, from which His oracles were audibly delivered. There God revealed, through inspired prophets, His will concerning men. What a glorious mission! But it failed through disobedience and sin, and left the God-given work incomplete. Had Israel been true to its trust, the civilization of the world would have been as far in advance of the present as we are in advance of the religious and social condition of a thousand years ago. But for sin, the Golden City might still have been the glory and crown of Mount Zion. Its magnificent temple might still have reflected back to heaven the glory of the rising sun. Her fields would not have been desolate, her people scattered like chaff, nor her once powerful government groaning under the yoke of a debasing and tyrannical power. Let us inquire into God's will concerning us. It is manifest in all our past history as well as in our present advanced position.

Through us, if obedient to His will, all the nations of the earth may be blessed. Through disobedience our fate may be as sad and our downfall as complete as that of Israel. It may be said with emphasis, whether by way of warning or of prophecy, that this nation can never forget God and continue to exist as a government of the people. It can never lay aside the Bible and cater to infidelity; it can never, from false conceptions of liberality, yield its hold upon the Sabbath-day, and offer its sacrifices upon the altars of iniquity, and still fulfill its mission to mankind. The world is groping for light, as it never did since the eyes of our first parents were opened to the distinction between good and evil. Science and philosophy are carefully analyzing the motives and inducements which lead to sin and misery, shame and crime. Moralists are trying to evolve from the confused mass some universal method that will both prevent and cure. There can be no political panacea for all these evils. The law can restrain and punish offenses; philanthropy can alleviate much of suffering; charity can relieve distress and drive want from the door, Christian sympathy can comfort and console, but nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse the world from sin. The Church of God is working earnestly for that unification of humanity which

shall bring all lives into sympathizing touch with each other and shall add to all the wondrous touch of that life which said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The political world, too, is looking toward the lifting up of men, in its desire for universal peace. While wickedness is in the hearts of rulers, national difficulties will probably be settled by the sword. War may have its purposes, but governments are recognizing that better and more effective methods may be found in peaceful adjustments. Happy will it be for nations when they "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more." It is a hopeful sign that the tendency of the world is in this direction.

At our great Exposition at Chicago there were exhibited the latest military improvements, both for defense and offense; fearful engines for the destruction of life and property; models for tremendous naval structures which made the war vessels of a few years ago appear like frail toys; of harbor and inland fortifications that seemed to the casual observer almost impregnable; ponderous guns, capable of carrying their destructive force into cities and against defenses miles away; small arms for close engagements, and equipments and appliances for

rapid movements upon both land and sea—all seemingly for the annihilation of hostile forces. But, terrible as they appeared, they are not without another and brighter side. Are they not, as well, messengers of universal peace? With such destructive implements, battles must be fought at longer range. Victories will no longer be won by superior force, nor by the persistence of human courage. Scientific skill, with mechanically perfect implements, which leave the human unit out of the computation, will be the agencies that will determine the issue. Men will not willingly fight against machinery, for courage will find but little credit in the account. The art of war itself is therefore becoming the strongest argument for the settlement of national disputes by peaceful arbitration.

You will all agree with me that the world has had enough of war, and only needs peace for the advancement of future civilization. The course of empire rolling westward has doubtless made this new world the field of triumph upon which the great battles of peace are yet to be fought, and where God's kingdom upon earth is to be established. The gathering of nations upon our soil, each bringing the tribute of its best skill, our standing face to face in social contact with all nationalities, our mingling

of voices, our communion of thought, our sincere welcome to all, our rejoicing together, has only been equaled by the great chorus of the morning stars, when all the sons of God shouted for joy. It is to us an earnest that in America

> "There shall be sung another golden age,
> The rise of empire and of arts."

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Upon our obedience to His will now depends the issues of the future. The text has for us its prophetic warnings. Israel had its rise and fall. Over the fields of lovely Palestine, that land of promise and of rest, under whose fair skies the children of Abraham were to dwell and become mighty, where the God of their fathers was to be worshiped in the beauty of holiness—over that land sin and disobedience have cast their baneful shadow; upon its beautiful plains, where peace could have found an eternal resting-place and God's people an abiding home, the world's great armies have for ages marched back and forth, destroying the fig-tree and the vine, and drenching the earth with the warm life-blood of millions of creatures created in God's image. Israel had been helped until repeated perverseness had forfeited their claims to divine protection. Let this nation take timely warning from Israel's fate, lest we de-

spise the providences that have saved us, and fall more sadly, more deeply, and less pitied. This nation is not yet beyond the danger line. We have still to combat the sins inherent in the make-up of our social life. We have yet to fight against the iniquities which the tide of emigration is pouring in among us; against false political theories that are claiming recognition in our national creed; against infidelity, Sabbath desecration, and the superstition of false religious worship. Dangers threaten us on every side—danger to our Constitution, to our national life, to our religion, and to our social life. Israel worshiped strange gods and went astray, and so may we if we suffer ourselves to be beguiled from the true path. One evil above all others finds its stronghold in a mistaken and perverted public sentiment. We worship at the shrine of Bacchus and pay heavy tribute to his priests. Intemperance stalks boldly among us—a crime against society, a sin against humanity, and a reproach to our boasted civilization. It swallows up the good that would lift men up, counteracts the best efforts of the Church, and sows poverty and crime, and drags its victims to the lowest depths. Think of the profanity, the immorality which float like a pestilence into the atmosphere from this sin. We need to bat-

tle against this iniquity with all the combined moral influence of Church, State, and society.

Another danger that threatens our political welfare is the corruption which the false teaching of foreign emigration is bringing among us—socialism, in its most offensive form; anarchy, with its unreasoning ignorance; infidelity, in its most repulsive garb, and Old World political heresies with a total want of appreciation of the beneficence of our institutions. These evils are too great to be counteracted by the education of our schools. We must add the missionary efforts of the Church and the individual influences of all thinking men. The evil is among us, and can not be thrust aside. It must be met, held in check, and remedied. We must uphold the truth of the Gospel, observe the sanctity of the Sabbath, preserve the purity of our home life, and fearlessly educate against the superstitions of a false faith. We may well ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," and He is still upon our side. Shall we be unmistakably upon His side?

Comrades of the Grand Army, your responsibility in this work is of no small import. For you to-day

> "The trumpet of the gospel sounds,
> With an inviting voice."

It calls you to repentance. It calls you to the defense of the Gospel and of Christ's kingdom, just as the liberty bugle called you, years ago, to the defense of the Constitution and the Union. It calls you to rally under the blood-stained banner of the cross, with the same valor with which you gathered under your country's banner, and expects you to fight as bravely for God's cause as you went forth and fought for the old flag and for your firesides when the nation's life was in danger.

There will be no bloodshed or mortal wounds, there will be no broken hearts or severed home ties, there will be no sorrow or weeping for loved ones who shall not return again, there will be no hospitals or prison-pens, no weary marches, no hunger, no thirst, and no privation. The warmth of God's love will cheer you on. The light of His countenance will make glad your pathway. His Spirit will be your guide, His strong arm your defense, and His everlasting bounty your reward. "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

As I look back over the past and recount His providences, as I turn and look far down into the future, and see before the onward march of our people the fiery pillar, the cloud, and the manna, I recognize the guiding and giving hand of God and re-

joice in His presence among us. As I behold the nation building firmly upon its immovable foundation of faith in God, and see it rising higher and higher toward the eternal throne, as I see an exalted citizenship approaching the estate of the angels, as I see the great truths which make men holy and happy asserting their dominion over the land, I thank God most heartily for the revelation of His Word and the gift of His Son. I thank Him for a free Gospel and a free government and a free people, and pray that the ark of His covenant shall forever abide with us and His presence be manifested in every heart.

VII.

CHRIST THE LIBERATOR.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—JOHN VIII, 36.

WHAT a blessed thing is freedom if properly understood and intelligently enjoyed. It bears men up on the wings of peace and carries them forward toward that high estate which the Psalmist describes as "little lower than the angels" where they shall be crowned with "glory and honor and have dominion over all the works of God's hands." It is the expression of the divinest right bestowed on man by his Creator; its utterance awakes the deepest feelings of the soul—feelings that have revealed themselves, not only in the sublime strains of poetry and oratory, but also in deeds of heroism, to describe which the historian uses his choicest phrases. But what is freedom—this boon that noble natures love above every other thing and to retain which they would be willing to die if needs be? We answer, it is not the inherent right possessed by men to live

and act without restraint—to follow one's inclination without hindrance, to seek pleasure and enjoyment of life as inclination or fancy may suggest. Alas! that is the dangerous rock upon which so many human lives have been wrecked and thousands of precious souls lost. That is license and not liberty, and license is ever a relentless foe to freedom. Freedom does not imply the absence of law. When man was created he was surely a free man. There existed no human power to restrain him; but he was not without law. There was a command given to control his conduct. There was a line of limitation beyond which he was not to go. Then at the very start of the race, before tyrants and task-masters had an existence, law and liberty were in harmony with each other. The Divine command did not affect the true liberty of man. The freest people to-day are the most law-abiding. There can be no liberty worth having without law. What then is freedom? It is the voluntary acting of the individual through mind, heart, and body, in harmony with the Divine Mind as revealed in nature's laws, the Decalogue, and the life of Christ. He who lives in harmony with the Divine mind as he finds it expressed in nature, revelation, and the life of Christ, is the true free man. He who does not live in conformity to that

mind is a slave though he may dominate nations as did Napoleon, or have kings come bowing to him like an Alexander the Great.

That he might choose to do the will of God was the reason his Maker endowed him with the freedom of choice, just as He gave him eyes to see and ears to hear with. He never intended that man should enslave himself by the bad use of his power of choice; but he has made bad use of his choice and as a result slavery of different kinds has followed. Under sin he is a slave and this condition requires a remedy. The remedy needed is a liberator. History tells the stories of men who, possessed of patriotic love and heroic souls, have sought the emancipation of their fellows from the thralldom of political tyranny. The achievements of some of these have filled the world with admiration. But earth needs a greater liberator than he who sets a nation free or smites off the shackles of a people. It needs one who can liberate the whole man and all men everywhere. Can such a liberator be found? The answer to this question brings great joy. He has come. It was at His birth that the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." He it was who said to the Jews who thought they were free men while in reality they were slaves.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

HE GIVES CIVIL LIBERTY.

This has been the dream of humanity in all the ages. Nations have been trampled under the feet of tyrants, yet love of liberty has not been destroyed in the breasts of these people, and in some instances has the most passionate love and the grandest heroism been displayed to gain it. How much the Greek of ancient times prized liberty! To gain it what battles he fought and what sacrifices he made! But the love he showed for liberty has been displayed by other peoples as well. When Wilberforce was trying to secure through Parliament the liberation of the slaves under the British flag in the far away islands subject to British rule excitement and expectation reached the highest pitch. The slaves were anxious for their freedom. Fluctuating between hope and fear they impatiently awaited the arrival of the vessel which was to bring them the tidings of success or failure. At length the vessel bore in sight. Thousands crowded the shore to get the earliest news. The captain saw the multitude and realized the anxiety that pressed upon every heart. As he neared

the landing and his voice could be heard by those on shore, he shouted the word "Free!" "Free!" "Free!" It was enough; that single word expressed it all. The vast concourse took up the cry of freedom and shouted until both land and sea eachoed and re-echoed the joyful strain. In our age it is more than ever showing itself as an irrepressible passion.

Do you remember, when the last battle for the Union had been fought and the standard of Rebellion had been lowered into the dust and the sword of resistance to rightful authority had been sheathed, how the prison doors flew open and the brave men who had suffered long and cruelly marched forth with their faces toward home—how the whole nation rejoiced? They were free and the hillsides and the valleys of the North were made glad by the voice of public rejoicing because liberty had been proclaimed to the captives, and fathers, and sons, and brothers were no longer held prisoners. For freedom men have suffered, fought, and died. Nations have been revolutionized for it and in all the westward course of the star of empire the one great, inspiring thought of liberty has led the van like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But Jesus Christ did not come to earth to meddle with political organizations,—to overturn governments and estab-

lish new and better ones. He came not to be an earthly ruler or to set up an earthly kingdom. All this He disclaimed. How then could He give liberty to the politically enslaved? But a moment's thought will make this clear. As the kingdom of Christ extends on the earth the governments of the nations must be influenced by its principles, and as it advances to world-wide dominion the governments of earth shall be molded on those principles and its rulers govern under the influence of its laws. The advance of the kingdom of Jesus implies the advance of great freedom-giving truths which men incorporate into their lives. Such a truth is the brotherhood of men. That men are related to one another through a common parentage is a fact that has scarcely been recognized among the nations, and in the absence of such recognition and under the power of sin tyrants became possible and most of the race political serfs. But Jesus Christ teaches the brotherhood of men by making known to them the Fatherhood of God. As this truth spreads among men despotism becomes impossible and the thrones of tyranny doomed. Let this sun, truth, rise to noontide splendor in any land and czar and subject will look upon each other as brothers, and the former will take off from the latter the chains which have

so long bound him, and with the heart of a brother bestow upon him the rights of manhood and the privileges of the free.

As this kingdom extends man's intrinsic worth becomes more widely recognized. Jesus Christ by His teaching shows man's worth in God's esteem to be such that to secure his salvation no sacrifice that He could make was considered too great. He taught that a man's condition or situation does not affect his worth. His poverty does not depreciate him. He may be a beggar full of sores with only the dogs for his physicians, yet so high is he in heaven's esteem that at his death angels are in waiting to bear him to Abraham's bosom. Let men come to have such conceptions of their worth and they can not be kept in abject positions. They will aspire to places of highest recognition as men. Let rulers have such notions of the ruled, and their government of them will show the consideration their worth demands. Let this estimate of man as taught by Christ become recognized, let the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and his intrinsic excellence spread, and civil liberty will be proportionately enjoyed. It will solve the race problem, and labor riots and strikes will become a thing of the past. Employer and employee would dwell in harmony and labor in peace. Na-

tional despots would be unheard of and injustice unknown. It is unquestionably true that the nations in which these truths are best known and appreciated are the freest to be found on the face of the earth. On the other hand there is nothing more disheartening or degrading than the fetters of slavery. Under its hopelessness men shrivel, wither and die. Its weight crushes down the buoyancy of the human heart and surrounds life with an eternal cloud of poisoned vapors. He longs for death to sever his earthly chains and free him from the whip which drives him to his toil. It is only when hope enters as an element of endurance that he clings to life and longs and pines for the hour of his deliverance.

CHRIST GIVES INTELLECTUAL LIBERTY.

The mind of man, like his body, is under the control of laws. His thinking is according to law, and hence liberty is not a characteristic of his intellect. Knowledge comes by intuition. As long as he keeps his eyes open and sees he can not exclude perceptions from his mind. In thinking we are bound to do so by the law of truth. Jesus did not come to emancipate mind from its natural government any more than to liberate the body from the laws of health; but he came to emancipate intellect from those things, of

human origin, which fetter its action. The priests among the Jews, standing as they did between God and man, had great influence over the minds of the people. So also had the rabbis as teachers. These together devised rules of conduct, imposed heavy burdens on the people and used compulsory methods to make them conform to vain traditions that made void the law. They delivered their own commandments unto the people instead of God's. Under this tyranny the people groaned and were burdened. Is there not mental slavery to-day as tyrannical as existed in any age? I do not mean in Mohammedan countries only, but in Christian lands as well. These are not in one community but in all. They are so enslaved intellectually that they do not and dare not think for themselves. But Christ gives freedom from all this kind of slavery. He does this by inviting men to come to Him, come to Him from priest and rabbi—come to Him from all who would bind burdens on and enslave the mind—come to Him and learn of Him, as their Teacher, and they will find rest for their souls. Christ emancipates men intellectually by giving them the truth—the truth He declared would make them free. He said I am the Truth. He would not have the Jews accept what He said about Himself on His own saying, but

told them to search the Scriptures for they testified of Him. He impresses upon men their personal responsibility to God. "Every man shall give an account of himself to God," and therefore every man shall be responsible for his thinking,—for his creed, whether he received it from Augustine, or from Calvin, or from Wesley. It matters not whence it comes, he will be held responsible for it as his own. Jesus would impress upon men their individual responsibility to God, and lead them to seek the truth that they might be free. In proportion as men find the truth as it is in Jesus shall the slavery of ignorance and superstition disappear.

CHRIST GIVES SOCIAL FREEDOM.

It would offend many people who walk the earth proud of their freedom to be told that they are in the bonds of degrading serfdom. They are found among the rich and the poor. Look at a few things—first, the deference shown to position and rank. How elevated we feel because we have spent a few minutes of conversation with the governor, or a senator, or any high official. To have the acquaintance of one such is more boasted of than to have that of a hundred worthy people of lower station in life. Position

catches the eye of many and they see not the character of its holders. Doubtless a certain deference ought to be shown men of position, but never that deference which lowers a man's self below the dignity of true manhood. Such lowering hurts the soul. See how marked is deference to position and rank becoming among the wealthy of our country. A man who has the title of duke and perhaps nothing else, is sought by our women of millions just because of his name and position.

Look at the deference that is shown to wealth. We would not decry riches. Money is a very important possession. It may greatly help men to better themselves and their fellows. But when it becomes a thing of pre-eminent importance to a man it becomes his master. That Roman emperor whose passion for riches was so great as to make himself the heir of rich men and then hasten their demise, was the slave of his passion though the despotic ruler of the greatest empire. There are those whose character would ostracize them from the society of decent people, yet who are honored simply because they have money. We boast that the distinction that marks society in the Old World does not exist here. But our boasting is vain. Society among us is graded not by titular distinction, but by wealth.

There are the poor, the working classes, the rich, and the very rich, and from the highest to the lowest there is shown this deference to great wealth. Wealth is the god that has the homage of the greater number, and they are therefore its servants.

Jesus teaches men that the highest of living is in the closest relationship with God—that upon Him are all the affections of mind and heart to be placed. We are here on important business which has to do with our souls and their eternal destinies. The aspiration of the soul should be after heavenly things, and purity of heart and treasures in heaven should be the earnestly desired objects.

JESUS GIVES MORAL FREEDOM.

Men may have political freedom; their country may be the freest of earth's nations; they may have intellectual freedom, and yet be in the most fearful bondage—one in which the slave forges his own fetters, and ever works toward his own degradation. Comrades, what does it avail an individual or what advantage has he gained if, while his body is free, his soul is fettered and bound down? He who spake the words of my text said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" He is a true

son of liberty who is a loyal son of God. Let us remember that

> "It is not all of life to live,
> Nor all of death to die."

The body at the best has but the promise of this life, while our immortal nature has added to it the promise of the life that is to come. The greatest tyrant of man is sin, but it is not in the might of armies to deliver him from the bondage of sin. Men have sought to achieve their own emancipation and early history records the names of men who have been noted for their uprightness, but they have ever failed.

In all history only one has appeared able to smite off the fetters of sin and let the enslaved go free. That one was Jesus Christ. He by His sacrifice has made a jubilee possible to the slaves of sin and hell. He by His Holy Spirit emancipates the soul from the guilt and condemnation of sin. The voices of myriads in earth and in heaven testify that Jesus gives freedom from sin.

Freedom from this thralldom implies freedom from the bondage to law. As has already been said, law is a good thing; it is necessary to liberty. But to those who are not in harmony with it, it is a task-master. He who is not in love with law is a slave

to it. How great is the number of those thus enslaved! But moral freedom implies liberty from legality and this Christ bestows by causing to exist in the hearts of men love for the Divine law. He who can sing, "O, how I love Thy law" is no longer under its bondage. Law is not felt by him who can say, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." Christ as man's Liberator frees His people from the tyranny of self. He smites off the fetters of the flesh and places the spiritual nature of man on the throne, thus making him his own master, and by generating in the heart supreme love for God drives out of the soul all fear that has torment or that enslaves. When love of God possesses the soul there is no fear of life's evils or of death's doings. In the presence of the last foe he can shout, "O! death, where is thy sting?" "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Comrades, Christ is the prime mover and shall yet be the grand Assurer of the world's freedom.

He is creating an atmosphere in which human serfdom will strangle to death. He has used the chivalry of men on the battlefield to further His cause. But had it not been for the teaching of His truth, never would men have risen to the point of wringing a Magna Charta from a tyrannical king,

and never would hundreds of thousands of brave men of our country have been willing to sacrifice their lives in the cause of human liberty. It is something to know that you had a part in the sublime work of striking the shackles from off the slave, and affording him a chance to arise from his degradation, and, through Jesus Christ, to become a man.

Comrades, while you can not but rejoice in the work you have done, see to it that in the highest and grandest sense you also are free. Free! This little word in the world's history has had more influence among men than all the products of earth's golden mines. It is to-day the earthquake of the century before whose force old powers are trembling.

Nearly two centuries ago this holy star of freedom stood above the Bethlehem manger which held the infant Christ, and as the morning dawned and the star faded into the greater brightening, the Sun of Righteousness and freedom arose, proclaiming liberty to the captives and joy to the world.

"In the beauty of the lilies
Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom
That transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy,
Let us die to make men free."

In the light of Christ's teaching the foremost nations of the world are gradually developing into

a higher appreciation of their duties. Can any one who looks back upon the last thirty years of our national history say that the thoughts of the people have not changed? A new developing process began with the Emancipation Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln. But we are only at the dawning. Popular government, in which the hopes of all are concentrated, is yet in its infancy. We can only conjecture what the coming years will be when "righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep," and selfish greed for gain shall not rule. We are standing at the threshold of the great structure which those who come after us shall erect. The past, with its valuable lessons; the present, with its wonderful activities, are but the John the Baptist "crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Comrades, will you be free men for God as well as for your country? None can doubt your loyalty to the flag. When danger threatened, you bravely followed it; you offered your lives in defense of government and home, and when the final blow was struck at human slavery, you formed the solid front that carried into execution the grandest proclamation of the centuries. You achieved results which all the coming ages shall applaud.

As you stand to-day in the full enjoyment of the

political liberty, the voice of the God of Battle calls on you to escape from your spiritual bondage—from the chains and fetters which, unseen, bind you in sin. I know the excuses you are ready to plead. I know the disposition of the human heart to set aside conviction in the future. But remember that the wages of your spiritual bondage is death,—death to the soul.

Would you know the burden of this spiritual servitude? Do not ask the slave who has suffered in body, nor the serf who has been in abject degradation. Rather ask him whose life has been swayed and controlled by unholy passions; ask him whom the chains of debasing habits bind down in servile obedience to the lower instincts of his nature; ask your own heart, when your better self is struggling for the mastery over habits and desires that you would gladly bury deep from your sight. Would you realize the lesson of the blessing of soul freedom, and would you know its worth? Go ask the soul rejoicing in the evidence of pardoned sin. Go ask the redeemed in glory who sing their hallelujahs around the eternal throne. Go, ask the Master who invited you. Would you know the joys of emancipation, come to the Savior!

Who but those who underwent the experience can imagine the emotion which swelled the heart of

the men in Southern prisons as they stepped into the sunlight of freedom? The black horrors of the prison-pen behind them only added brightness to the light of liberty. They were again free, and the pent-up feelings, which, like the body, had been held in subjection, now rolled and swelled, and broke on them like ocean billows under the impulse of the storm, and when again the old flag waved over them nature yielded, and we are told death came to some from excess of joy. How much greater is the liberty offered to you! Comrades, having fought the battles of your country, and won the freedom of which we proudly boast, do not think your work is over. To you the nations look for noble examples of virtue and patriotism. God and your country demand that your influence shall be on the side of God and humanity.

Honored for your services, loved for your patriotism, respected for your loyalty, you go forth among the people with influence and power such as no other organized body ever possessed. Plant your standard of virtue upon the highest hilltop, guard well your defenses, and see to it that no foreign heresy shall find an abiding foothold upon our soil or defile the purity of our standard. Thus loyal to your country, and true to the God of your fathers, the example and teachings of the Grand Army of

the Republic shall march into the future in conquering force, before which disloyalty shall fly, and heresy and error lay down their arms in unconditional surrender. If thus you live up to your high privileges as God's true freemen, when your final summons shall come, it will not be taps but reveille —not taps for the darkness and the night of earth, but the glorious reveille for the eternal morning; not taps to tell of marches ended, battles fought, cares over, sorrows past, but reveille that gives a welcome to the camp of everlasting peace where feet never grow weary, cares never come, sorrow never enters. The lights are not out. Earthly glories and triumphs pale before the light that shines about the great white throne.

The armies of earth are mustering on the plains beyond the river. There in countless numbers are our comrades of the old days who fought the fight and kept the faith, and now, the conflict over, wear the crown. We but bivouac here. Let us be so true in our comradeship, so earnest in our service, so loyal in our thoughts and actions to the Great Commander of all the armies of earth and heaven that amid the closing scenes of our earthly campaign and pilgrimage there shall be sounded for us not taps, but reveille!

VIII.

A GLORIOUS VICTORY.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."—2 TIM. IV, 7.

As in the splendor of an autumn evening the sun sinks into the West in a flood of light and beauty, reflecting upon all that it is leaving the gorgeous colorings of its cloud settings, so, in equal glory, the great Apostle to the Gentiles was about to pass away from his earthly field of labor. The vision of his approaching death was before Him as he wrote to the beloved Timothy, "The time of my departure is at hand." He realized that His victory had been complete, as he added the triumphant climax to His eventful life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept faith."

The sublime heroism of Paul, from the hour of his conversion on his way to Damascus, when, under the quickening impulse of a new life, he cried out, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" down

to the hour of his death, has no parallel in the history of human achievements. Paul's figurative expressions of fight and victory are not drawn from the field of carnage, where man, through ambition, dyes his hands in human blood, and where the shouts of triumph mingle with the shrieks and the groans of the dying. His words breathe no intimation of satisfied vengeance in their tone, nor any suggestion of exultation over conquered foes. They are the calm of a departing day after the life-giving warmth of the sun and the healthful breath of the zephyr have sent their vivifying influences into every form of life and growth. *Nature's* hour of rest comes when the light of the day departs, and the shadows of the night gather; but the resurrection of life comes with the dawning of the morning, and new beauties spring forth from the germ of yesterday, and from the treasures which its sunbeams have left hidden in the crevices of the earth, and have stored for use in stalk, and leaf, and flower. So, through alternating activity and repose, great and good lives with their deeds, and thoughts, live on to lift up and bless the world.

Paul's figures are drawn from the Olympic contests, where merit alone was the criterion; where the highest honors were awarded and the greatest

homage paid to the victor—contests in which the crown of reward was emblematic of peace, being made, not of jeweled gold, but of twigs of the wild olive cut from the sacred trees which grew in the Altis, or consecrated grove of Olympia.

The world has always admired, and sometimes worshiped, heroism. In its true sense, it is something apart from courage or valor. It is something apart from every other attribute of our nature. It combines in its meaning all those qualities which make a man fearless in pursuit or defense of the right, which nerve the strong arm to shield the defenseless, which, in behalf of mercy, interpose self-sacrifice between vengeance and justice, and then adds to these qualities noble and lofty aim and God-like manliness, subordinating life itself to the faithful discharge of duty.

History is replete with deeds of unsurpassed courage and daring, but they have been far from being deeds of true and noble heroism. The fierce sea kings of the North were fearless and bold, but they were merciless and cruel. The pirates of the Mediterranean, the rovers upon the land, the brigands of the mountain-passes, the uncivilized hordes which at times have swept the earth in pursuit of booty, have all been courageous, but not heroic. No

touch of magnanimity or pity ever entered their hearts. No sympathy for suffering or anguish, no compunction for injustice, no instinct of humanity stood between their brutality and its victim. The nobleness which ought to possess the human soul was hopelessly sunk in Satanic fiendishness and meanness.

The mounds along the Tigris and Euphrates, which bury so much of national greatness; the sands of Egypt's desert, which are fast covering from sight sphinx, pyramids, tombs, and temples; the sad ruins of great cities along the paths where the commerce of the world was once carried,—all tell their story of the passions and greed, but contain no record of the heroism, in the wickedness which wrought such desolation. The unscrupulous conqueror is never a true hero. Attila—the so-called "scourge of God," may have devastated the fertile plains of many a flourishing European province, and may have carried out his boast that "the grass should not grow where his horse had trod," but no heroic act of his ever helped the world to a higher civilization. Hamilcar may swear the young Hannibal to eternal hostility to Rome, and Hannibal may fulfill his oath in successful generalship, in great and hard-fought battles, yet his warfare and

his courage were those of pure vengeance and not of true heroism. The world was not helped by his victories. Cortez, in Mexico, and Pizarro in Peru, may have fought with great fearlessness and courage against large odds in numbers, and may, with awful heartlessness, have slaughtered their tens of thousands—it was a warfare for greed, of brute force against helplessness, with no heroic element to redeem its iniquity. Both conquerors destroyed, for centuries, higher civilizations than those they substituted. There was courage, daring, and heroism of no ordinary character, when, for the deliverance of the hosts of Israel, young David stood before the Philistine giant, armed with but the humble sling of the shepherd boy, firm in the righteousness of his cause, and confident of his skill in the use of his familiar weapon. There was the righteous magnanimity of a heroic soul when, in the cave of Engedi, this same David, grown to manhood, cut off the skirt of the sleeping king who sought his life, and yet, because his enemy was the anointed of the Lord, withheld his hand from vengeance. Again, in his life there was the noble tribute of a courageous man to valor when he refused to drink, but poured out, as a sacrifice unto the Lord, the water procured from the well of Bethlehem, at the

peril of the lives of three of his bravest men. In the eventful life of David—a life of humble beginnings and of subsequent exaltation, of persecutions, trials, and deliverances, of great joy and still greater sorrow, of sins and punishment, of repentance and forgiveness—there was, in his constant turning to God, his deep humiliation and oft acknowledgments of weakness, a struggling heroism which commands our admiration, and teaches us a lesson of faith and reliance scarcely equaled in any other man. There are heroes all about us in every-day life waiting only the moment and the occasion for the sudden development of the latent courage of whose existence we are not dreaming. Hidden though it may be, it is there, unsuspected as well by its possessor as by ourselves, still held in reserve by Divine wisdom, like the seed-germ waiting only the conditions that shall quicken its vitality and give it force. A sudden flood in the River Adige once destroyed many of its bridges, and caused great destruction of life and loss of property along its shores. At Verona a house containing a poor family stood upon the last tottering arch of the bridge. The people who were in peril were calling from the windows for help. None dared, however, to venture upon the treacherous waters. "A hundred French

louis," said Count Spolverini, who stood by, "to any one who will undertake to save the unfortunate family." A strong, stalwart peasant, unknown to the crowd, pushed forward, seized a boat, and, with a will and determination born only of true greatness, pulled for the rapidly falling arch. Reaching it in safety, he quickly helped the people into the boat, and through the most threatening danger, turned toward the shore, landing his precious freight without accident. "Here, my brave fellow," said the count, "is the money you have so nobly earned." If the act had been one of great courage, the reply which added great glory to the deed was that of true heroism. "I do not sell my life for money," said he, "give it to this poor family who need it."

It is related that General Sherman, while marching through Georgia, suspected that a certain mountain-pass was covered by the batteries of the enemy who were concealed on the other side. The general called to an engineer and told him to run his engine through the gap, and to whistle along the way. The brave fellow, without a shadow of fear, sprang to his engine, and, as he started, turned and called out, "General, remember I have a wife and four children in Ohio." The engine puffed, the whistle came shrill, and many a prayer followed,

and many a silent tear was shed for the brave comrade. The thunder and roar of the enemy's artillery filled the air, but the whistle blew loud and long. Again the thunder; again the whistle. The mingled noise reverberated and rolled down the mountain-side, amid the cheers of the awaiting army. At length the whistle died away. It could no longer be heard. Hearts throbbed and faces blanched amid the painful suspense. After an interval the distant shrill blasts of the whistle again pierced the air. Cheer after cheer greeted the sound. Nearer and nearer it is borne until the engine swept back through the gap, and back to the Union lines, all battered and scarred. The engineer, with blackened face, and with marks of the conflict, leaped from his post, and, turning, patted his engine, saying, "Good girl! Good girl!" The hero! Soon after a messenger placed in the hand of the engineer a check for $500. "What's that?" "By order of General Sherman, sir." "Take it back. I can not take it. That spoils the whole thing; I gave my life to the country in the beginning of the war, and do you suppose I would sell it for $500, or $5,000,000?"

The general then inquired if no reward would be acceptable. Said our hero, "Yes, tell that woman in Ohio that I love, that her husband did his duty,

that 's all." General Sherman immediately made out a certificate of honor, with his name attached, and this was forwarded to President Lincoln, and, with his signature added, the paper was forwarded to the wife of the immortal engineer. This man used the force of his nature for a Godlike purpose, and his reward was abundant.

The Apostle Paul was just such a hero, equal to any occasion or emergency. He had fought a good fight, had sacrificed the ease and comforts of life for the benefit of others. He had given his energies and talents to the cause of his Master, had prosecuted his work with fidelity, and was now ready to be offered up. Worldly honor had no value to him when weighed in the balance against duty. To the Corinthians he wrote, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." To the Philippians he said, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain," and to the Galatians he wrote, "I am crucified with Christ." As an intelligent Hebrew, Paul's advantages were very great. He must have had a wide knowledge of all the stirring events of his time. How conducive were these events to the development of a nature like his! In his boyhood, the child of Bethlehem was sojourning in Egypt whither His parents had fled to escape

the hand of Herod. The weeping and lamentation in Rama, Rachel mourning for her children, had just fulfilled the well-known prophecy of Jeremiah, while the story of the cruel murder of innocent children by the king was being sadly repeated among the mothers of Judea. At Hebron, the Baptist, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, was still in his mother's arms. In lovely Gennesaret, upon the shores of its beautiful lake, were being trained to the fisherman's life the boys to whom Christ afterward said, when he found them plying their vocation, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men."

Augustus Cæsar was emperor of Rome, and Rome was the mistress of the world. Herod the Great had died. As king of Judea he had ruled his people with remorseless cruelty, and his crimes, fresh in memory, were the household stories of terror among the people. The Jews were looking for their national restoration, but the names of Archelaus in Judea, and of Antipas in Galilee, did not inspire them with much hope of an early return to their former condition. The temple had been rebuilt in great magnificence, but, while its worshipers revered it, the glory that it had once known was gone. The ark of the covenant, with the mercy-seat and cheru-

bim, had been destroyed, while, with them, had departed the Shekinah, the symbol of the Divine presence. As Paul grew to manhood, the wonderful teachings of the carpenter's Son were stirring the hearts of the multitude in Judea, and the regions round about Jordan, with a new doctrine, which revived man's spiritual nature and brought him into closer relationship with God. It was a new Gospel, a resurrection of the life of the soul from the grave where Jewish forms and ceremonies had long ago buried it. This same Teacher, in His youth, had astonished the doctors in the temple with His questions and answers. He had driven from that temple the money-changers and all the mercenary horde that had polluted it with their merchandise and trade. He had then reproved the wickedness of false worship, prophesied that the temple itself should be destroyed, that not one stone should be left upon another that should not be thrown down. He had brought His own life down to the weary and burdened of the earth, and had taken the common people to His heart, teaching to all the great doctrine of love to one another. Miracles had been publicly performed, the sick had been healed, and the dead raised to life before abundant witnesses—all these things had been topics of familiar thought and talk

which Paul had heard, and of which he was conversant. It was one of those great periods around which cluster the historic association which the world never forgets.

It was a fitting time for the birth of that wondrous religion which has blessed mankind, marching on from conquest to conquest, and is yet to establish Christ's kingdom from the rising to the going down of the sun. All that our religion saw at its nativity has passed away, principalities and powers have gone, great temples have fallen into ruin, proud cities have been deserted, while the dust of time has buried them in almost forgotten graves. Memories and traditions once potent in their sway over the minds and actions of men have vanished like the dreams of youth, and are forgotten to the world. But the kingdom of the Master, which, in its feebleness, saw them in all their glory and power, has outlived them all, and has surpassed them all in grandeur and force. Christ's doctrines and Paul's teachings—the Sermon on the Mount and the great Epistles—to-day mold our laws, fashion our civilization, and lift men up toward the open gates of heaven.

When Christ came, the Jews, once so powerful as a nation, had lost their political grasp, and were upon the decline. Power had centered at Rome,

and civilization in Greece, while great learning flourished under the fostering care of the great cities of Antioch, Tarsus, Rome, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus. Paul lived in these remarkable times, and had the advantages of their influence and thought. He was born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a city noted for its refinement and culture. He was brought in contact with scholars and philosophers, with doctors of the law, and with rulers in temporal power. From his childhood he became imbued with the educating influences of Roman civil government, Greek literature, and Hebrew theology. He grew to manhood, gathering wisdom from the lips of Gamaliel, while listening at times to the earnest discussions of the Jewish rabbis. He was an unconscious instrument being prepared under the guidance of Divine providence for the great work upon which he was soon to enter for the religious emancipation of the world.

The Mosaic Dispensation had run its course, and fulfilled its mission. The New Dispensation had dawned, and the Sun of Righteousness was rising to give light to a benighted religious world. Christ's kingdom had come to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

Civil power had centered at Rome; Hellenic

civilization had reached its height at Athens; learning flourished in the great cities under the fostering care of the priesthood. Unmindful of all these, Jerusalem, broken-hearted and in bondage, sought comfort and refreshment far away from the fountain of living water: sought protection in other than the strong arm of Jehovah; looked for deliverance to sources from which no help could come. The Jews longed only for the Messiah as a temporal ruler who should free them from the yoke of Roman bondage; for His coming as a King who should restore their broken kingdom to its former glory, while the Spiritual King, who would have broken their chains, unregarded by them, slept peacefully in a lowly manger at Bethlehem. As the years went by, the star, the angel's song, the visit of the Magi, the proclamation of peace and good will, the heroic life of self-denial, and of holy living and good works, had no significance to the beclouded Jewish mind. For temporal power, for the restitution of national glory, for emancipation from the bonds of the usurper, they hazarded all—and lost. He who would gladly have helped them, He who would have gathered their children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, was despised and rejected of His own until their house was left unto them desolate.

Paul a Pharisee, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, true to the tenets of his faith and courageous in the performance of duty, as he understood it, joined in the public clamor and became the persecutor of Christ and His followers and friends. He must have well known the history and life work of the Nazarene. The crucifixion, the resurrection, and ascension were known in all the country round, even to Cilicia, when Paul became the dreaded champion of Judaism, and the persecutor of the disciples. But, on that eventful day when the light and the voice, and the power of the Almighty arrested his course, and Paul became a converted man, all his courage, loyalty, and faith *centered* in the Christian hero, and he stood forth before the world the foremost man of all the ages. There was no effort to escape his conviction, no hesitation in the performance of his duty. Bravely, like the true hero that he was, he at once took up his march to the front, and toward the kingdom, and henceforth wielded the sword of the Spirit in the service of his Master with more telling effect than he had wielded the sword of power under the authority of the Sanhedrin.

The knowledge that he had acquired and the learning of which he had become the master among the classic surroundings of Tarsus; the training that

he had received, and culture and development gained from association and travel; the lessons learned at the house of Judas, and among the disciples at Damascus, eminently fitted him to formulate the teachings of the Master, and to establish, for all time, the foundations of doctrinal Christianity. The wonderful heroism of his life is shown in what he suffered and endured for the Master's cause, as he has related it in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians: "In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches." The Church and the Christian world to-day, as they will in the coming centuries, testify to the abundance of his labors, to the fruits of his faith, and the value

of the great fight that he made in behalf of Christ's redeeming mission to fallen man. Well may he say, "I have fought a good fight, and won a glorious victory."

"Servant of God, well done!
Thy glorious warfare 's past;
The battle 's fought, the race is won,
And thou art crowned at last."

The heroism of this world is not all recorded in the books. History is busied in the notice of prominent events, of mighty achievements of the lives of great men, who have wielded the scepter of power. It might possibly have forgotten Paul but for his Epistles. He was not popular with the rulers, he was not honored by the masses. Even among his own, authority was often disputed and set at naught, but for all that, his converted life was a grand triumphal march, through a world of opposition, toward the higher attainments of the soul. Paul died, but his work was imperishable. It stands like a beacon upon the topmost heights of the everlasting hills illumining the road all the way from earth to heaven. Through his writings a clear and intelligible system of Christian doctrine has been established, and the enlightening and saving power of Christ's mission has been carried into millions of homes. The Gospel of charity and love has added a

refining influence to the household, making brightness and sunshine where sin had once cast its gloomy shadow. Through the Gospel of divine grace the Church of God has been made pure and holy, swelling the hope of eternal life into a grand inspiration in the lives of men. It is not only upon the field of battle, when great armies meet in conflict, that true courage is shown. It is not alone when the cannon plows its murderous furrow through whole files of brave men, nor when cavalry charges and flashing sabers strike down scores to be trampled and crushed beneath the hoofs of maddened horses, that bravery finds its highest manifestations. It is not alone, I say, in these baptisms of fire and blood, when thousands fall to rise no more, that true heroism is to be found. Heroism is the child of high principle, born of circumstances and courage. It is a precious gift of God to man, wisely distributed among the lowly, as well as among the high and mighty. It is found in the quiet and humble walks of life, in silent sufferings, when sorrows come in troops and afflictions assail the home circle and unsettle domestic comfort and peace. It is found at some inconspicuous post of duty, when fidelity to principle rises far above selfishness or cowardly escape from consequences. Sometimes it is found where hope is long deferred,

and the heart is sick, and at other times in seasons of dire trial, when some dreadful temptation offers sin as the only means of escape. The better promptings of the heart lift the individual above the tempter, and maintain unsullied the integrity of the soul.

If we could read the lives of those around us aright, how much we would find to admire rather than condemn; how much to commend rather than reject; how much of a noble and heroic quality that we pass by unnoticed! It is well that God knows the human heart, and that His judgments are wiser than man's. God never overlooks merit. He never misconstrues motive. False appearances do not deceive Him, unworthy petitions do not move Him, insincere prayers are not answered by Him. His rewards will be distributed with an impartial and unerring hand.

Around us are men, probably unnoticed in their humble way, who are making brave fights, and are keeping the faith, whose crowns are awaiting them above. Yonder is a man who, by no mismanagement of his own, has been overtaken by misfortune, and all his possessions—the accumulations of years of labor—like those of Job, have been suddenly swept from him. He maintained his integrity while

fortune smiled. Will he do so still? He brings his burden to the Lord, and prays for help. He is being tried in the fire, angry creditors pursue him, and no one offers help in his great need. The heavens above him are as brass, and the world seems to have deserted him. He keeps his faith in God, saying, with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him," takes heart, and struggles on. He labors on with honest purpose, and, although it may be a life battle, yet he wins in the end, and gains a victory for truth and righteousness. Even should he fail in the strife, God measures the motive and counts it to him for true heroism, and bestows the reward. Such a conquest always lifts the world toward a higher life.

The ancient, wealthy, and powerful family of Hastings lost their patrimony and estate at Daylesford in the cause of the Stuarts. Warren Hastings, a descendant, when but a boy of seven years, while lying upon a bank overlooking the estate, resolved some day to recover it to his family. Through a long and eventful life he kept this one resolve ever before his mind. His perseverance was rewarded. He retrieved his family fortune, and after a life, not unclouded, indeed, but full of usefulness to his government and in high favor with his sovereign, he

retired to Daylesford to die. Here was the heroism of effort which had its reward in the restoration of his family patrimony and name.

There is a higher, nobler, and more worthy heroism than this, of which history never speaks, and which the busy world scarcely notices as it passes by in its hurry and rush for worldly gain. In yonder household a Christian mother, bereft by death of her husband and support, is left penniless, with a helpless family to support and educate. There is no time for repining and useless lamentation. She carries her case to the Father of the fatherless, and, with the courage of her faith, goes to work at whatever her hands find to do. Early and late she toils, struggling on, and, never giving up, never faltering, never losing heart, she accomplishes her purpose. Every comfort, and even health, has been sacrificed in the interest of her loved ones, but the heroine has been rewarded in having fought a good fight.

This is no idle fancy. Such Christian heroines are all around us upon earth, and all around the throne in heaven. Thousands of the sons and daughters of such households live to bless the world with the legacy of their mother's love and trust. I am talking to men to whom these thoughts of the home

struggles are not unfamiliar—men who, in their country's cause, have fought a good fight, and who still keep the faith of loyalty to their government and of loyalty to the old flag. I am looking into the faces of those who, at their country's call, responded nobly and acquitted themselves like men; men who, upon the march and in the bivouac, in tent and around the campfire, with that nobleness of life and tenderness of heart that characterize the truly brave, often turned their thoughts toward home, and to the hearts that beat in unison with theirs. Ah! you will never recall how often you have affectionately and lovingly called into your reveries the wives and little ones who, while their fathers marched and fought, were fervently praying at home for the safety and return of their loved ones in camp and field. I am talking to brave men who, while fearlessly facing danger, where death-arrows were falling thick and fast, thought anxiously of the equally brave and heroic wife and mother at home, who might be called upon to struggle on alone. Yours was not only the heroism of loyalty to your country, but it was the heroism of sacrifices of things precious to you, through which our national blessings were to be continued to others. It was the courage by which men with strong domestic ties and with the cherished

endearments of home and family in their bosoms, still pressed eagerly to the front, determined at any cost to uphold the integrity of the Union, and to preserve unsullied the colors to which the oppressed of all nations were looking with earnest hope.

You fought a good fight, and nobly finished your work. You shared with your comrades the dangers of the campaign. They shared with you your solicitude and anxieties for the loved ones around your firesides.

General Grant had been represented in the South as a monster of blood-thirsty cruelty, who spared in his march neither unprotected women nor helpless children. One day, on the march to Richmond, a plainly-dressed, unassuming officer, with some members of his staff, stopped for refreshment at a stately home, whose surroundings had been somewhat marred by the ravages of war. A mother, a refined lady with several children, and one servant, were the only occupants of the house, all the rest having fled at the approach of the Union army. The officer assured the family of their safety and quieted their fears. While the meal was being prepared, the officer quietly and kindly won the children to him. He took the youngest in his arms, and another upon his knee, and fondled them, telling them,

with evident emotion, of the loved ones he had left at home, and how he longed to see them and be with them once more. To the mother he spoke encouragingly of the return of peace, and hopefully of the restoration of her household to the enjoyment of their old domestic life. The mother, struck with his tenderness and candor, stood with tearful eyes, forgetting the soldier, and seeing only before her the brave father, with his strong love, his warm sympathies, and his longing affection. When dinner was over, and the officers were about to depart, a guard was stationed at the house to protect the family from intrusion. "You have been very kind to us and I am grateful to you," said the lady to the officer, "and I wish you could remain until the army has passed, for we fear the coming of your commander-in-chief, General Grant." The plain officer replied, "I assure you again that you have nothing to fear. I am General Grant." Then said the lady, "My fears have wronged you, and I offer my apology. An army with such a commander, of such greatness of heart, can not be conquered. A cause defended by men who so love their homes and little ones deserves to succeed. The cause of the Confederacy is lost." Appomattox was not far off and that army did succeed. As the years roll by and

history gathers up the fragments of war incidents, which, together, make the annals complete, you rejoice in the part you took in the great struggle.

You are justly proud of the leaders you followed, and of the work you did so well for your country. You may well rejoice in your record, for your warfare was for man as God created him, free and unshackled. It was for the preservation of a Union of which constitutional freedom was the enduring corner-stone. It was for the stability of that mighty arch of which the keystone is civil and religious liberty.

Look over the great battlefields of history, and mark how few of the victories have been gained for man. Over many a fair land revenge has swept, bearing down myriads in its remorseless storm. Ambition has strewn its millions upon many a devastated field. Conquest and plunder have buried the hope, the happiness, and the lives of uncounted thousands, while the best interests of humanity can claim but few victories for its own. Over the plains of Egypt, up and down through Palestine, over Asia and through Europe, all along through the centuries vast armies have shaken the earth with their steady tramp, while the angel of destruction has followed their tracks and marked their path with

innocent blood and bleaching bones. Against man, and not in his behalf, has the sword too often been drawn. Proud commanders, in pursuit of power and greed, have been victorious for a season, and in their turn have been cut down by a stronger arm upon the same quest.

Comrades, another warfare is to-day calling you to the field. From every height that looks down upon the surging mass of humanity, as they strive in daily competition for the bread that perishes, the trumpet of the great Captain of our salvation is sounding, calling for whole armies of volunteers to carry to them the bread of life. Satan is warring for their destruction. From the haunts of vice and sin, from dark caves and secret places of foulness, from deceptive traps and gilded pitfalls, His emissaries, armed with deceitful tongues and poisoned arrows, watch for the ruin and eternal death of precious souls. You are in danger of being destroyed. Your children are in danger of being carried away captive. Your friends and neighbors are in danger of being overwhelmed by this merciless foe. The Redeemer of souls is calling to you to join His forces, enlist in His cause, and for the salvation of your own and the souls of others, to go forth to the battle against sin.

Our Jesus is a Captain who has never known defeat. In His ranks there is no distinction among those who fight in His cause. For him that overcometh, for him that keeps the faith and finishes the work, there is laid up a crown of righteousness. His name is enrolled on high, never to be overlooked or forgotten. A Russian soldier, after having performed feats of great valor, lay dying upon the field of battle. His comrades gathered around him, willing to afford him such help as could be given him in his last moments. As his life was fast ebbing out, he said, "I have but one request; answer to my name at roll-call." Though more than forty years have passed since then, and all his old comrades are dead, his name remains upon the roll, and is still answered to by some living member of that imperial regiment.

Earthly enrollments may be lost or destroyed, earthly honors may fade and our names may be forgotten here, but if once recorded upon the Lamb's Book of Life, they will be answered to through all eternity. Our King, our Redeemer, the Captain of our salvation, who was victorious over death and the grave, bids us come to Him and find life, that ours may be a glorious triumph when we have finished our course.

Go to yonder battlefield after the fight is over

and night has drawn the curtain of darkness around the scene. The living armies, both victorious and vanquished, have passed on—the one in pursuit, the other in flight. None but the dead and the wounded are there, save only the merciful corps of surgeons and assistants who are seeking the living to bind up their wounds and relieve their sufferings. Listen to the groans of agony, and the piteous cries for help. Directly is heard the voice of one heroic sufferer, whose faith rises superior to his pain, as he breaks out into that immortal and unsurpassed song of the soul—

"Jesus, Lover of my soul."

The hymn is familiar to all. It was sung in the old church far away where many had so often worshiped. It was sung in the old home among the hills, when loved ones had gathered at the fireside. One after another takes up the strain. When the words:

"Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last,"

are reached, far and wide, as far as the ear can catch the echo, the whole field resounds with the chorus, ascending upon the wings of faith up to the throne of Him who hears the prayers of the dying and pardons the penitent. Ever since Charles Wesley

penned that comforting hymn, its language has been the cry of the stricken and wounded souls. Hearts heavily burdened, spirits wounded and distressed, lives bereaved and sorrowful, dying men and women, have found courage and strength, and dying grace in the assuring words:

> "All my trust on Thee is stayed,
> All my help from Thee I bring."

And so our heroic soldier, in the midst of his pains and dying of his wounds, called down the Comforter to his stricken comrades. If, upon such a battle-field, a song of trust may be sung by the dying, what think you will be the song of the hereafter, when the redeemed shall sing their hymn of rejoicing at the great gathering upon the streets of the New Jerusalem? In all the glory and majesty of heaven, the Captain of our salvation will be seated upon the eternal throne. The multitudes, which can not be numbered, as they pass in review, will pay homage to Him who was wounded for our transgression, and who, through suffering and persecution, secured our redemption. Then shall they sing the new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seal thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of

every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." Over those beautiful fields, unmarred by strife or blood, into the blessed light of the Sun of Righteousness, shall come marching the numbers that John saw, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. Then shall come the horses and the chariots of fire that were in the mountains round about Elisha, the innumerable company of angels from the City of the Living God of which Paul spoke, or the legions which the Master said were waiting the Father's command. They shall come from the uttermost parts of the earth, and from all the ages of the past. Marching down the centuries shall come, not the Persian and Babylonish hosts, not the Egyptian armies nor the Roman legions, not the mighty, conquering hosts of earth, but the true, the noble, and the good of all times. The patriarchal hosts shall be there, those that followed Moses from the land of bondage, through the sea, and that sang with Miriam upon the other side the song of the Lord's triumph over the pursuing horse and rider, will be there. The saints and martyrs who have lived and died for Christ, a vast multitude arrayed in white, will be there, and nearest the throne. The great miltitudes who have taken their lives as an offering and carried the good tidings of the Gospel

of Christ to the famishing souls of earth's dark corners will have their place in the grand procession. Those who have lifted man from the degradation of sin into the liberty of the Christ life; all who have held aloft the banner of the cross and fought valiantly against Satan, and all who have come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, will be there to swell the innumerable throng. What a glorious gathering that will be as they stand before the throne,

> "Even more than conquerors at last,
> Here they find their trials o'er;
> They have all their sufferings passed,
> Hunger now and thirst no more."

All who have fought the good fight, have finished their course, and kept the faith, will stand by the living fountains, clothed in glory and crowned with righteousness, loved and honored by the King.

Comrades, shall we be there? Shall we meet in that blessed land upon the other side, and once more fall into line with our old comrades, and join with them in the song of the redeemed? You obeyed your country's call in 1861, obey now the Gospel trumpet which calls you to volunteer for Christ and the triumph of His kingdom upon earth. You will then have your name enrolled for eternity in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Our hearts swell and our lives seem grander as we recall the trials and glories of the past, and think of the blessings they secured to the present and the heritage they have provided for the future. Our comrades died for these. For these we cherish their memories; for these we forget their errors and recount their virtues; for these we strew flowers upon their graves, that the odors may climb the morning sunbeam and mingle with the fragrance of their deeds.

As I look into your earnest faces to-day, and think of the brave stand you made for the right; when I think of the heroism with which you followed the old flag, I remember that you fought a good fight, and nobly kept your country's faith.

I pray God that, when your warfare here is over, as soldiers of the cross, you may have your places in the ranks of the great army beyond the skies, clothed in robes of victory, and resplendent with all the glory of the redeemed.